

Report of the
JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON
THE CALIFORNIA STATE
PROGRAM FOR THE
ADULT BLIND



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Published by the
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President of the Senate

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President pro Tempore

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JOINT LEGISLATIVE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON
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March 12, 1951



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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Sacramento, March, 1951

To HONORABLE GOODWIN J. KNIGHT, *President of the Senate*
and HONORABLE SAM L. COLLINS, *Speaker of the Assembly*

Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 28 of the 1949 Regular Session of the Legislature, creating an Interim Committee on the State Program for the Adult Blind, we hand you herewith our report covering the activities of the committee, which you will find contains under Section I information gathered by the committee and listed in seven separate subheads in the table of contents of this report, and likewise the conclusions and the recommendations of the committee.

We believe the work of the committee has furthered the principle contained in the resolution creating the committee; namely, the assisting in developing a program of (1) the proper orientation of the blind, particularly the newly blind, and (2) the training of blind adults to the end that they may become self-supporting citizens and not dependent upon state aid, and (3) the adoption of new policies that are necessary to permit the full use of any methods and techniques to achieve these ends. The committee has various recommendations to carry out this program via two methods: one, by an improved method of administration practices by the various state departments dealing with blind adults; the other, certain legislation clarifying state policies relative to the program for the adult blind.

We trust this report will be of assistance to the Legislature and all interested citizens in understanding the adult blind program in California.

Respectfully submitted,

JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE ON STATE PROGRAM FOR THE
ADULT BLIND, S. C. R. No. 28

JACK B. TENNEY, State Senator

HAROLD T. JOHNSON, State Senator

KATHRYN T. NIEHOUSE, Member of the Assembly

ERNEST C. CROWLEY, Member of the Assembly

ARTHUR W. COATS, Member of the Assembly

ARTHUR H. BREED, JR., State Senator, *Committee Chairman*

INTRODUCTION

The Joint Legislative Interim Committee on the State Program for the Adult Blind held meetings in San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, San Diego and Berkeley. The committee sought the advice and constructive suggestions from all groups and individuals who were in any way familiar with the adult blind program. In this report are listed the names of individuals and their positions, under the heading of "Sources of Information," Subdivision A, Section I.

The committee realized that it could not suggest a proper program for the adult blind unless it consulted individuals and organizations more familiar with the needs and desires of the adult blind than was the committee. The committee, therefore, had no preconceived ideas or conclusions at the start of its work, nor was it desirous of justifying or criticizing any existing program, group or individual. It sought advice to the end that a more constructive over-all program for California's adult blind would be developed. The committee went into existing practices to the extent that it might indicate how a better program might be developed. It sought the advice and counsel of all of the state agencies that are now providing services to the adult blind, as well as recipients of blind aid and residents of the state home at Oakland and workers in the three state workshops, as well as individuals who are operating private, totally blind manufacturing enterprises. Complete cooperation and assistance in these studies were given to the committee by the Department of Education, particularly those charged with the Division of Special Schools and Services. Both the State Department of Public Health and the State Department of Social Welfare were most cooperative and helpful. The Bureau of Rehabilitation of the Department of Education supplied valuable testimony. All individuals appearing before the committee were given an opportunity to present supplementary written testimony, if they desired. A great many witnesses did reduce to writing the salient points of their testimony made before the committee. Many suggestions were made dealing not with fundamental policy or matters requiring legislation but pertaining to administrative policies in the various state departments now operating the adult blind program. Many of these suggestions have been activated by those state departments with the result that the adult blind program has already shown desirable improvement. This committee's report will contain further suggestions for improvement via administration and it is hoped by this committee that these recommendations will be adopted by the administrators charged with carrying out these services to the adult blind.

It is therefore felt by your committee that the provisions of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 28 are being covered by this report. The committee does not consider that the state blind program, even with the adoption of the conclusions and recommendations of this committee, will be complete as there is yet much to be done in the way of developing a long range, sound, yet progressive program for the legislatures of the future to consider, and, since the Legislature can only act on well-founded facts, it is our belief that some similar committee should carry on the studies in a similar manner to this committee.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The committee is very grateful for the wholehearted cooperation and assistance of the Deputy Superintendent of Instruction and Chief of the Division of Special Schools and Services, Dr. Herbert R. Stolz, and his staff. Likewise, Mr. Lloyd L. Harris, Special Research Assistant of the Office of the Legislative Auditor, has been most cooperative in helping the committee gather its material relative to this subject. Grateful thanks are due to the special efforts and efficient work of Miss Isabelle Robbins, committee secretary, in keeping the minutes, preparing progress reports for the committee and maintaining accurate files on all matters that have been submitted for our consideration. In addition to the Department of Education, the committee has benefited by the splendid cooperation of the State Departments of Public Health and Social Welfare. In fact, all whom the committee have consulted have universally been most cooperative in a spirit of striving to develop a better program for the adult blind.

SECTION I

INFORMATION GATHERED BY THE COMMITTEE

In order to present information to the Legislature in useful and reasonably concise form, the large body of detailed material which was gathered by the committee has been sorted and arranged under the following main headings:

- A. Sources of Information.
- B. The Adult Blind Population of the State.
- C. The Prevention of Blindness.
- D. The Restoration of Sight.
- E. Amelioration of the Condition of Needy Blind Adults.
- F. Rehabilitation and Occupational Placement of Blind Adults.
- G. Employment of Blind Persons in Special State-subsidized Workshops.

A. Sources of Information

The committee consulted and was assisted by the following organized groups:

- Advisory Board, State Blind Shop, San Diego.
- American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
- Board of Directors, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
- Braille Institute of America, Inc.
- California Blind Workers' Guild.
- California Council for the Blind.
- Coordinating Committee on State Services for the Blind.
- Local 936 American Federation of Labor, Los Angeles.
- National Federation of the Blind.
- National Society for the Prevention of Blindness.
- Opportunities for the Blind, Inc.
- San Diego Braille Club.
- State Department of Education.
- State Department of Public Health.
- State Department of Social Welfare.
- State Department of Industrial Relations.

The following individual citizens appeared and gave testimony before the committee at one or more of the public hearings, or wrote letters to the committee; or, at the request of the committee, prepared written statements:

- Mrs. Maude Albers, a day worker, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
- Mr. J. Robert Atkinson, Vice President, Board of Trustees, Braille Institute of America, Inc.
- Mr. Charles Berta, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
- Mrs. Juliet Bindt, Teacher of the Blind, California State Library.
- Mr. Joe Block, former resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
- Mr. Ernie Blumenthal, former day worker at the Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

- Mr. George A. Brown, Manager, Industrial Workshop for the Blind, Los Angeles.
 Mr. Robert W. Campbell, Director of Advanced Studies, California School for the Blind, Berkeley; and representing California Council for the Blind.
 Mr. Joseph F. Cloutman, day worker, Training Center for Adult Blind, representing the California Welfare League for the Blind, Oakland.
 Miss Jennie Colyn, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind.
 Mr. E. C. Copeland, Superintendent, Training Center for Adult Blind.
 Mr. Carl Daggan, Instructor, Industrial Workshop for the Blind, Los Angeles.
 Mr. R. P. M. Davis, President, Sta-Neet Corporation, Los Angeles.
 Mr. Louie Denlis, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Mr. Edwin K. Dole, Assistant Division Chief, Division of Special Schools and Services, State Department of Education.
 Robert Dyar, M.D., Chief, Division of Preventive Medical Services, State Department of Public Health.
 Mr. Frank Edoff, Chairman, Board of Directors, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Mrs. Arthur Eick, President, San Diego Braille Club.
 Mrs. Phylis Field, Bookkeeper, State Blind Shop, San Diego.
 Franklin M. Foote, M.D., Executive Director, National Society for the Prevention of Blindness.
 Mr. Harry E. Fuller, Shop Steward, Local 936 American Federation of Labor, Los Angeles.
 Father Charles Hackel, member of the Board of Directors, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Mr. Robert Hale, Instructor, Industrial Workshop for the Blind, Los Angeles.
 Wilton L. Halverson, M.D., Director, State Department of Public Health.
 Mr. Lloyd L. Harris, Special Research Assistant, Office of the Legislative Auditor.
 Mr. Thomas M. Hawthorne, Insurance Broker and Realtor, Van Nuys, California.
 Mr. Leonard Hesterman, Executive Director, Opportunities for the Blind, Inc.
 Mr. Harry D. Hicker, Chief, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Department of Education.
 Mr. Allen Jenkins, Rehabilitation Officer for the Blind, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Oakland.
 Mr. J. Milton Johnson, Director of Social Welfare, Braille Institute of America, Inc.
 Mr. Carl B. Kirk, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Mr. Charles Kuhn, Shop Worker, representing the workers for the State Blind Shop, San Diego.
 Mr. Roy Leasley, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Mr. Fred Lindes, Shop Worker, also representing the workers for the State Blind Shop, San Diego.
 Mrs. Anna Little, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Miss Hazel Longshore, President, California Blind Workers' Guild, Los Angeles.
 Dr. Berthold Lowenfeld, Superintendent, California School for the Blind; formerly Director of Educational Research of the American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
 Mr. Earl H. Lyon, representing resident workers, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Mr. Lawrence Marcelino, Rehabilitation Officer for the Blind, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, San Francisco; and representing the California Council for the Blind.
 Mr. Cyril W. McClean, member of the Board of Directors, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.
 Miss Bernece McCrary, Supervising Field Worker, Field Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, State Dept. of Education.
 Miss Mary Mevius, Shop Worker, also representing the workers for the State Blind Shop, San Diego.
 Mrs. Ruby Overholtzer, formerly Chief, Division for the Blind, State Department of Social Welfare.
 Mr. C. Fred Pearson, Insurance Broker, Chairman of the Advisory Board, State Blind Shop, San Diego.
 Dr. Newel Perry, President, California Council for the Blind.
 Dr. Henry B. Peters, representing the Alameda County Optometric Association and the University of California School of Optometry.

William A. Pettit, M.D., State Ophthalmologist, State Department of Social Welfare.

Dr. Kingsley Price, Professor of Philosophy, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, N. Y.

Miss Nora Quick, Seamstress, Industrial Workshop for the Blind, Los Angeles.

Mr. Louis Raymond, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

Mr. David G. Reeder, Manager, State Blind Shop, San Diego.

Mr. Thomas E. Rickard, independent salesman, products of the blind, Berkeley.

Mr. Harry L. Runnion, Rehabilitation Officer for the Blind, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Los Angeles.

Mr. George A. Scott, member of the Advisory Board, State Blind Shop, San Diego.

Mr. Anthony E. Septinelli, Supervisor of Services for the Blind, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Department of Education.

Mrs. Mattie Sinclair, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

Rabbi William M. Stern, member of the Board of Directors, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

Herbert R. Stolz, M.D., Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education; and Chief, Division of Special Schools and Services.

Mr. David H. Strelow, co-owner, Blind Industries of California, Los Angeles.

Mr. Perry Sundquist, Chief, Division for the Blind, State Department of Social Welfare.

Mrs. Catherine Swartz, representing day workers, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, President, National Federation of the Blind.

Mr. Tony Teshera, resident, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

Mr. Lupe Frank Torrez, day worker, Training Center for Adult Blind.

Mr. John Tromley, Instructor, Industrial Workshop for the Blind, Los Angeles.

Mr. E. C. Turner, Owner and General Manager, Blind Made Products Sales, San Diego.

Mrs. Gerald Whitaker, Secretary, Board of Directors, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

In the course of its investigation the committee gathered information from the following books and publications:

Adjustment Training Centers for the Blind in the United States; Bulletin No. 1, American Foundation for the Blind, July, 1950.

Blindness, edited by Paul A. Zahl, Princeton University Press, 1950.

Census and Economic Survey of the Blind in California, State Department of Education, 1935.

Education Code of California.

Report of Interdepartment Committee on Study of Problems of and Services for the Blind, California State Printing Office, 1946.

Russell Sage Foundation Social Welfare Year Book 1949.

Welfare and Institutions Code of California (Deering's).

B. The Adult Blind Population of the State

Under the laws of California, a person is considered blind who has 20/200 or less visual acuity in the better eye with correction, as measured by the Snellen test, or who has such limitation of field or other defect as to render him incapable of obtaining an education or making a living with ordinary visual proficiency. (Section 3252.5 Welfare and Institutions Code).

Estimates of the number of blind adults who reside in California range from 16,300 to 19,000 persons. The estimate of 16,300 was based upon the report of the National Health Survey completed in 1936 which indicated that the incidence rate of blindness in the United States was 1.75 blind persons per 1,000 of general population. For the California

population of approximately ten million this gives a total blind population of 17,500. From this total 1,200 was subtracted as the estimated number of blind minors less than 21 years of age. There is reason to believe that the incidence of blindness in this State is somewhat higher than in the country as a whole, but for the purposes of this report the conservative estimate of 16,300 blind adults has been used.

The age distribution of blind adults in California is estimated to be approximately as follows:

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
21 to 29 years-----	625	3.84
30 to 39 years-----	911	5.59
40 to 49 years-----	1,710	10.49
Subtotal -----	3,246	19.92
50 years or over-----	13,054	80.08
Total -----	16,300	100.00

The sex distribution of blind adults in California is estimated as approximately 53 males and 47 females per 100 blind persons. Below the age of 50 years the preponderance of males is probably more marked but above that age the ratio tends to approach 50 to 50 because of the greater longevity of women.

The distribution of blind adults according to principal source of economic support could not be determined with any high degree of accuracy. From such statistical data as could be obtained from the State Department of Social Welfare, the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the California School for the Blind, the distribution by principal source of support was estimated to be approximately as follows:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
(a) *Fully self-supporting-----	450	2.76
(b) Partially self-supporting-----	1,525	9.35
(c) Supported mainly by federal, state and county aid-----	9,730	59.69
(d) Supported in state or county institutions	515	3.16
(e) Supported by relatives or others-----	4,080	25.03
	16,300	99.99

* Includes 154 persons in training for self-support who are receiving temporarily some assistance from the State.

The number of persons added each year to the adult blind group in California is estimated as approximately 700. Of these about 60 are blind children reaching the age of 21 years and the balance are adults who become blind. Because of the lack of any systematic procedure for prompt reporting of the newly-blinded it is not possible to even estimate the age distribution of this latter group.

C. The Prevention of Blindness

The relative importance of the several causes of blindness is probably about the same in California as in other parts of the country. More than 40 percent of blindness is due to chronic degenerative processes in the eyes of persons over 50 years of age; about 20 percent is the result of infectious disease; in 10 percent blindness is the result of direct injury to the organs of sight; in 10 percent blindness is due to congenital and

other prenatal causes; the remaining 20 percent is made up of cases with various less frequent causations.

With recent medical advances in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases the percent of blindness from this cause has decreased significantly. At present there appears to be a significant increase in visual defects often associated with premature birth.

With the increase in average age of our population the degenerative processes of declining years account for an ever increasing proportion of blindness. For this reason the Department of Public Health advocates the widespread use of appropriate screening tests which will detect such degenerative processes early enough to at least postpone the total loss of vision.

1. *The prevention of hereditary blindness* can be brought about only through education and individual guidance concerning marriage, or through the licensing control of marriage. Such education and guidance of blind minors is a recognized responsibility of the California School for the Blind. The premarriage medical examination required by state law gives the opportunity for withholding a license from applicants when both are blind due to heredity, but the difficulty of establishing such a diagnosis with certainty makes this method of control ineffective.
2. *The prevention of blindness due to prenatal causes other than heredity* is, at present, beyond medical control except that blindness due to congenital syphilis may be prevented by treatment of the mother during pregnancy. The reporting of cases of syphilis is obligatory.
3. *The prevention of blindness due to infectious disease* has become increasingly effective in California through the cooperative efforts of physicians and public health officers under regulations established by the Legislature. The present regulations appear adequate and further reduction in the number of cases of blindness due to this cause is predicted by the State Department of Public Health.
4. *The prevention of blindness from industrial accidents.* In 1935, upon the basis of a carefully conducted questionnaire survey, Mr. H. D. Hicker estimated that in 3.9 percent of the cases in California blindness was due to direct injury to the eyes from industrial accidents. The committee was not able to make a comparable survey in 1950, but from the data available it appears probable that, in spite of the increase in industrial activities in the State during the past 15 years, the rate of blindness from industrial accidents has decreased. The records of Industrial Accident Commission show that injuries to one or both eyes occur frequently in industry but that injury to both eyes which results in blindness is relatively rare. Under the supervision of the commission this aspect of prevention would appear to be adequately cared for.
5. *The prevention of blindness from accidents not industrial* is largely a matter of education of children, parents, and other adults, supplemented by specific regulations governing automotive traffic, the sale of fireworks and B-B guns and the labeling of corrosive and poisonous liquids. In California the number of cases of blindness due to the nonindustrial accidents of the home,

the highway, and the playing field far outnumber those connected with industry. It is generally agreed that education of individuals will continue to be the most effective way to prevent blindness due to this cause.

6. *Prevention or postponement of blindness due to ageing* is a problem which has increased in importance with the increase in average length of life. The prevention or postponement of loss of sight during old age depends in part upon a general program for finding and treating degenerative processes as early as possible.

The State Department of Public Health recommends that to this end practical techniques for mass screening be further developed and used for detecting incipient chronic disease; and that these techniques include tests for incipient chronic diseases of the eye.

The State Department of Public Health, the State Department of Social Welfare, and the representatives of the blind concurred in recommending that the present program for the discovery and treatment of glaucoma be made more effective. They reported that more than 50 people become blind each year in California because of this disease, and that many more suffer some loss of vision and continuous pain because of it. Under the present law only persons who are either applicants for or recipients of state aid are eligible for treatment through the State Department of Social Welfare. It was recommended that such treatment be made available to cases of glaucoma when first the condition is certified by a competent ophthalmologist without requiring that the person be an applicant for State Aid to the Blind.

At a meeting held on June 26, 1950, the Advisory Committee of Ophthalmologists of the State Department of Social Welfare considered the problem of control of glaucoma and suggested the following program:

- (1) That when this department receives an application indicating the existence of glaucoma, the individual be notified of the finding of the examiner. That they be impressed with the seriousness of the disease; that they be provided with some type of information provided by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., or similar material, and that they be urged to seek the treatment in their local community.
- (2) When the individual is unable to pay for such local treatment, that the department offer to assist them by paying for this care.
- (3) That in those cases where the local examiner requests consultation with a more experienced or skilled ophthalmologist, that the department pay for such consultation, including travel, examination, and if surgical intervention is found desirable, that the department pay for the hospitalization and the surgery fees, together with incidental expenses.

It must be remembered that many of these cases may require more than one surgical procedure, that most of them will require a continued period of observation. However, if such a program is instituted, it is felt that the onset of blindness in many cases will be postponed and in some cases prevented.

SUMMARY—Both to promote the welfare of its citizens and to minimize the sums which the State must expend to assist blind persons the program for the prevention of blindness is of primary importance.

In 75 percent of the cases of blindness occurring before the age of 50 years, blindness might have been prevented.

Proper education of children and adults is especially important and should be intensified to reduce the number of cases of blindness caused by nonindustrial accidents.

Existing provisions for preventing blindness caused by infectious diseases appear to be adequate.

The reduction of the rate of blindness occurring among persons over 50 years of age requires study and concerted action by professional groups concerned with the early detection and appropriate treatment of chronic diseases which cause loss of vision. The State Department of Public Health and the State Department of Social Welfare are working on this problem.

D. The Restoration of Sight

At present the State offers operative treatment to restore vision to blind persons for whom restoration is possible and who are either applicants for or recipients of aid to the blind. For blind persons who are considered feasible for vocational rehabilitation the arrangements are made through the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation; for all others by the Department of Social Welfare.

Since July 1, 1945, 490 individuals have been operated upon. Of these, 336 had useful vision restored and were no longer eligible for aid to the blind; 58 had visual acuity improved but continued to be eligible for aid to the needy blind; 17 showed no improvement of vision after operation. During the last fiscal year 150 cases were operated upon and in 96 percent of them vision to better than 20/200 has been restored.

SUMMARY—The existing program for restoration of sight is one of which the people of California and the Legislature may well be proud.

Through operations on the eyes the sight of 490 needy blind persons has been restored in 90 percent of them to better than twenty two-hundredths and improved for all but a few of the others.

With the establishment of more adequate reporting of cases of blindness, and with the development of even closer interagency cooperation, this program will make an even more significant contribution to the blind and will effect a very considerable saving of public funds.

E. Amelioration of the Condition of Needy Blind Adults

1. Aid to qualified needy blind persons in California.

a. Authorization:

Division 5, Chapter 1, Sections 3000-3092, Welfare and Institutions Code.

b. The existing program was established in 1929. It is supported from state, federal, and county funds. The State Department of Social Welfare, which supervises the program, has summarized the existing program as follows:

Purpose: To relieve blind persons from the distress of poverty; to enlarge the economic opportunities of the blind; and to

stimulate the blind to greater efforts in striving to render themselves self-supporting.

Eligibility requirements: To be eligible for this aid an applicant must be at least 16 years of age, with California residence for five out of the last nine years unless blindness occurred in this State. Persons living in public institutions must leave the institution after receiving the first monthly payment. The personal property of a single person may not be more than \$1,200; the combined personal property of a married couple, when both are blind and both applicants for aid, may not exceed \$2,000. The assessed value of real property may not exceed \$3,500 for a single person or a married couple. The following relatives of a blind person are legally responsible for his support if they are living in this State and are financially able to assume such support: Husband or wife, parent or adult child. The maximum monthly amount of aid to a needy blind person is \$85.

Number of recipients: For April, 1950, 9,601.

Assistance expenditures:

	April, 1950	Estimated for 1950-51 Fiscal Year
Federal -----	\$285,777	\$3,729,200
State -----	505,938	4,957,200
County -----	None	1,651,600
Total -----	\$791,715	\$10,338,000

Social data for cases added during 1948-49 Fiscal Year: of the 2,496 new cases added, 4.4 percent were between the ages of 16 and 29 years, 9.5 percent between 30 and 49 years, 18.8 percent between 50 and 64 years, 67.3 percent were 65 years old or older; 88.5 percent were citizens of the United States; 96 percent had five years or more of residence in California; 22.3 percent lived alone; 56 percent had no income of any kind; 99.6 percent were not employed; 98.8 percent had never received vocational rehabilitation training.

c. *Recommendations for improvement.*

Several of the witnesses appearing before the committee drew attention to the fact that the California provisions of Aid to the Needy Blind are more nearly adequate than those of any other state. However, the representatives of the California Council for the Blind formally recommended that the following changes in the program be effected through legislative and administrative action:

- (1) Further separation of the program of public assistance for the blind from the program of public assistance for the aged by legislation requiring the appointment of at least one blind person to the State Social Welfare Board, and requiring the establishment of a special advisory board of blind persons to assist the State Social Welfare Board in all matters related to the program for the blind.

- (2) Corresponding separation of the program for the blind in county administration of social welfare, with blind workers given preference in the selection of staff for this division.
 - (3) The repeal of all legislation which makes blind persons who have relatives able to contribute to their support ineligible for public assistance under Chapter 1 or Chapter 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, and such repeal to be made retroactive.
 - (4) The introduction of procedures which will promote and facilitate prompt transfer of blind persons from the status of needy blind (Chapter 1) to the status of self-supporting blind (Chapter 3).
 - (5) The provision of state funds to supplement the maximum monthly payment when such supplementation is necessary to provide reasonably adequate boarding home or rest home care for aged and infirm blind persons. It was pointed out that in some instances such supplementation is now provided from county welfare funds; that in one county where this practice is followed 5.25 percent of the recipients of State Aid to the Needy Blind receive, also, supplementary county aid toward the cost of necessary boarding home or rest home care.
2. *State supported institutional residence and care for aged and infirm blind persons.*
- a. *Authorization:* Division 5, Chapter 2, Sections 3251-3252, Welfare and Institutions Code.
 - b. *Existing program:* This service is limited to less than 20 persons who were accepted as resident workers in the Training Center for Adult Blind in Oakland when that institution was operated as the Industrial Home for the Blind under the Department of Institutions. These persons can no longer work; about half of them are bed-ridden. The Legislature has provided that they be permitted to remain as residents as long as they so desire, and that if they have no source of income or support they shall be paid not less than \$2 a week. However, it was brought out in testimony before the committee that this payment is not being made because the Attorney General had ruled that such payment was forbidden by the State Constitution. Several of the blind workers requested the committee to find a way in which the intent of the Legislature could be legally carried out.

Since there are at present among the resident workers at this institution a considerable number who were accepted upon the understanding that they could remain as residents as long as they desired to, there will be for some years to come a diminishing group of nonproductive aged and infirm blind to be cared for at this institution.

Since 1946 resident workers at this institution have been admitted upon the understanding that their residence privilege would be limited to six years or less.

The Department of Education and the California Council for the Blind concurred in the recommendation that whatever provision is made for aged and infirm blind persons should be completely separated from the program of vocational rehabilitation of blind persons and from the program of state subsidized industrial workshops for the blind.

3. *Service of field workers*

- a. *Authorization:* Division 5, Chapter 2, Section 3253(i), Welfare and Institutions Code.
- b. *Existing program:* The program to assist blind adults in methods of practical reorientation to daily living at home and in the community was established by the Department of Institutions in 1937 under the direction of the Superintendent of the Training Center for Adult Blind at Oakland.

The books for the blind program was started by the State Library in 1904. The service of home teachers to teach blind adults the use of Braille and of talking books was introduced by the State Library in 1914.

Both these services are now administered by the State Department of Education. Under the law these services are available to any blind adult in the State who desires them. Over the years the number of field workers and home teachers has been increased by legislative action. There are at present 13 such workers of whom eight are visually handicapped, but the number of requests for their services far exceeds the assistance which the workers can supply.

For the Fiscal Year 1951-52 the department has requested six additional positions; and to adequately meet the demand from blind persons throughout the State still further increase of staff will be required in succeeding years.

The expansion of this program to reach all blind adults who ask for it was recommended in the Report of the Interdepartmental Committee in 1945 and was supported by the California Council for the Blind in testimony before the interim committee.

c. *Recommendations for improvement*

In the discussion before the committee it was pointed out that in the past the field workers have been required to devote part of their time to the details of arranging for a small number of blind persons the instruction, materials, and merchandising connected with part-time home industry. This responsibility has diminished the time which field workers could devote to orientation of blind persons to daily living.

The Department of Education emphasized both the difficulty and the need for securing trained field workers; the California Council for the Blind stressed the importance of successful experience as a blind person as the most important qualification for this service.

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Training Center for Adult Blind in Oakland recorded his disapproval of the recent amendment of Section 3253(i) of the Welfare and Institutions Code whereby the administration of the state field service for blind adults was withdrawn from the Training Center.

4. *The organization of home industries for blind adults*

- a. *Authorization:* Division 5, Chapter 2, Section 3253(g), Welfare and Institutions Code.
- b. *Existing program:* This service is one of the permissive functions of the Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland. The development of this program has been limited (1) to two centers, at Sacramento and San Jose, where a total of about 25 blind persons were supplied opportunity for instruction and part-time work; and (2) to such work for blind persons at home as the field workers could arrange in connection with their other duties. Less than 200 blind persons are receiving the benefits of this service.
- c. *Suggestions for improvement*

The Department of Education testified that the organization necessary to enable blind workers to earn money by the sale of articles made or assembled at home is an important program. In administrative practice, it should be distinguished from occupational therapy as used by home teachers of the blind to promote personal orientation.

The department pointed out that the mechanics of supplying raw materials to individual homes, of enforcing standards of workmanship, of collecting finished goods from homes over a wide geographic area, of arranging for the merchandising of these finished goods, and of keeping the necessary records of these procedures are not proper functions to assign to partially sighted or sightless home teachers.

The California Council for the Blind and a number of individuals familiar with the needs and desires of isolated blind adults urged that, in spite of the difficulties involved, the necessary legislative and administrative action be taken to develop opportunities for blind adults to engage in remunerative occupations at home or at field work centers like that now operating in San Jose.

SUMMARY—The California state program for ameliorating the condition of needy blind adults includes the granting of aid to 9,600 persons, the provision of residential maintenance and care for less than 25 persons, a home teaching service which reaches about one out of every six blind persons, and a home industry for the blind program which serves about one out of every 80.

The maximum aid per person is \$85 a month and the total of the annual state, federal, and county expenditures for this purpose is \$10,-338,000. The leaders of the blind recognize that this is one of the most generous and one of the best administered programs of its kind in the United States.

The California Council for the Blind recommended changes in administrative organizations and in staff qualifications which would recognize the special fitness of blind adults to direct and carry on the program of aid for blind adults.

The California Council for the Blind recommended, also, the repeal of all laws and regulations fixing the responsibility for support and care of a blind adult upon a spouse, parent, or child of that blind adult.

The council recommended, further, procedures for prompt transfer of qualified blind persons from the status of needy blind to the status of self-supporting blind.

The State Department of Social Welfare and the council reported that it is not possible for some aged and infirm blind persons who require special boarding or rest home care to secure this care from the \$85 per month allotment. The council recommended that provision from state funds be made to meet this need.

The problems connected with the residential maintenance and care of a small group of aged and infirm blind persons at the Training Center for Adult Blind in Oakland was discussed by the superintendent of the training center. The representative of the resident workers asked that some way be found to make a small weekly cash allotment to these persons who cannot work.

The Department of Education and the California Council for the Blind concurred in the recommendation that in planning the long-term program for the blind the residential care of aged and infirm persons be completely separated from the program of rehabilitation and the program of state-subsidized workshop employment.

The home teaching service to reorient blind adults to daily living is carried on by 13 field workers in the Department of Education. The demand for this service far exceeds the supply. The department is requesting six additional positions for 1951-1952. This will not fill the need but qualified home teachers are difficult to find. The California Council for the Blind estimates that eventually at least twice that number will be required.

Members of the Board of Directors of the Training Center for Adult Blind in Oakland expressed dissatisfaction over the recent removal of the field service from the direct administrative control of the superintendent of the Training Center.

The organization of home industries for blind adults in California has been developed on a small scale in the San Francisco Bay area and in Sacramento through the efforts of the field workers. Less than 200 blind persons are receiving the benefits of this service.

The California Council for the Blind and several individuals familiar with the needs and desires of blind adults in the State urged the development of this service on a state-wide basis. The State Department of Education agreed as to the desirability of such development but pointed out that the functions involved were essentially different from those for which field workers are selected.

F. Rehabilitation and Occupational Placement of Blind Adults

The program for special training and occupational placement of blind adults was started in California in 1920. The purpose of this program is to assist as many blind persons as possible to achieve economic independence through suitable work.

The chief responsibility for the program has been assigned to the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation of the State Department of Education; supervision of and assistance to blind college students is administered through the California School for the Blind at Berkeley.

To encourage blind adults to strive for economic independence the Legislature established in 1941 "Aid to Partially Self-supporting Blind Residents" as a separate category. Those who qualify for inclusion in this category are permitted to retain a limited amount of earned income, while they are working toward independence, without reduction of the amount of State Aid allotted to them.

1. The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

- a. *Authorization*: Public Law 113, 78th Congress, June 2, 1920, as amended; Division 4, Chapter 7, California Education Code, 1920, as amended.
- b. *Existing program for blind adults*: The bureau maintains a central office in Sacramento and seven district offices in San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, Fresno, Pasadena, Los Angeles, and Long Beach. Of the total professional staff of 103, there are 10 who serve exclusively persons with visual handicaps; in the three smaller district offices there are no special divisions which work only with visually handicapped clients.

During 1948-49 there were 394 visually handicapped adults who sought help from the bureau; of these, 203 were placed in gainful employment as follows:

Professions	13
Independent business	16
Blind stand operation	34
Employment with sighted workers	81
State or privately subsidized shops	39
Other miscellaneous employment	20
	<hr/>
	203

Of the group placed in employment 66 percent were less than 41 years old, 17 percent were from 41 to 50 years old, 14 percent were from 51 to 60 years old, and 3 percent were over 60 years.

- c. *Suggestions for improvement*: Without exception the leaders of the blind and the professional workers with the blind agreed that the number of independent self-supporting or partially self-supporting blind adults in the State could be and should be greatly increased. The State Department of Education estimates that the number could be doubled; representatives of the organized blind groups estimated that it could be trebled if suitable training and occupational placement were offered promptly to all blind adults who desire it.

There was general agreement that the first step necessary for the further development of this program is its *promotion among persons who have recently become blind*, and that this demands more effective provision for prompt reporting of new cases of blindness which occur in the State. It also requires closer teamwork among the several agencies concerned.

There was similar agreement that in the past the failure of a considerable number of blind persons to secure jobs or to keep jobs was due to inadequate orientation in details of daily living and to insufficient prevocational training. To supply this essential basic preparation it was recommended by the California Council for the Blind and the State Department of Education, and by at least 10 informed persons who testified as individuals, that as soon as possible there be established in the State one or more residential centers for intensive orientation and prevocational training.

It was suggested that these centers be open to blind persons who showed the determination and ability to achieve complete or partial vocational independence; that the course of training last for about six months; that the methods of instruction follow the general pattern established by the armed services during and after the last war; that the courses offered emphasize preparation for specific professional, and semi-technical training, for training in business management, salesmanship, and selected trades; that insofar as possible the staff consist of qualified visually handicapped persons.

It was considered essential that the operation of the centers be carried on in close relation to the field services for the blind and to the Vocational Rehabilitation program, but distinctly separated from any state-subsidized industrial workshop.

It was suggested by a blind man who has been active in planning and developing orientation and prevocational training in another state that such centers should be established, operated, and supported as an integral part of the Extension Division of the University of California. It was his belief that in this way it would be possible to set up first a summer session program and later a year-round program under well-established educational auspices and without the necessity for any new institutions.

Through its several representatives the California Council for the Blind made the following formal recommendations before the committee:

- (1) That the services of vocational rehabilitation officers for the blind be available to any blind person without regard to that person's economic status.
- (2) That the number of vocational rehabilitation officers for the blind in California be increased, and that there be a separate unit staffed by blind persons in every district office of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation to serve blind and partially sighted clients.

- (3) That the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation develop resources for finding placements for blind persons in a wider variety of occupations, and that in dealing with employers it make more effective use of actual work demonstrations by blind persons at industrial plants and in business operations.
- (4) That the bureau organize and make full use of a lay advisory committee of sighted employers to assist in educating other employers and the general public as to the vocational capabilities of blind persons.
- (5) That the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation expand its present blind stand program to include many other kinds of independent business enterprise. That provisions be made whereby vending stand operators may buy their stands from the bureau.
- (6) That vocational rehabilitation officers be discouraged from placing blind clients in state-subsidized or privately subsidized workshops.

A blind man who is part owner and manager of a private shop in Los Angeles, where he employs 28 blind adults, offered the following conclusions from his experience :

- (1) There are some among the blind, as among the sighted, who will take all the help the State can give, but there are many others who want to be independent. These latter want to be trained so that they can compete as equals with sighted workers in private industry.
- (2) To be successful blind persons require more intensive and more specific training for the particular jobs they are going to do. This requires detailed individual teaching by an instructor who knows how to teach blind persons.
- (3) The emphasis in teaching the blind should be first on *quality* of production. When this has been achieved, he must be taught to produce in sufficient quantity to give him pride in his work and to make him employable.

The Director of Social Welfare of the Braille Institute of America, Inc., described the various services which the institute offers to blind persons. He stressed the need for trained instructors to continue teaching blind workers *on the job* because the shop foreman has too many other things to do and cannot do this even if he knows how to teach a blind person.

This witness stressed, also, the need for some organization which will loan capital to blind persons for setting up small independent business enterprises.

A vocational rehabilitation officer for the blind testified that there is need for the development of special vocational training facilities for blind persons; that in the vocational training classes in public and private schools there is no one who has the knowledge or the time to adequately orient a blind trainee to the training situation.

A successful blind realtor and insurance agent expressed his belief that there is a sufficient number of blind persons who could succeed in

that occupation to warrant the setting up of a special course of instruction for them.

The Advisory Board for the State Blind Shop at San Diego presented in writing to the committee the following recommendations:

- (1) That the State Legislature be urged to appropriate sufficient funds to the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation for the employment of an adequate number of blind placement agents to meet the needs of the entire State and that one of these be assigned to the San Diego area.
- (2) That the State Departments of Public Health and Education be authorized and instructed to make a comprehensive survey of the blind of the State with a view to determining, among other things:
 - a. Whether or not sight can be restored under the state program established for that purpose.
 - b. Extent of previous education and training.
 - c. The need for further specialized training and the possibility of ultimate economic rehabilitation.
 - d. The need for social readjustment.
- (3) That in order to insure maximum employment of our otherwise unemployable blind and provide a high type of employment for numerous others of our blind, it go on record as favoring the establishment of a State Sales Agency for the Blind under the immediate supervision of the Director of the State Department of Education or his deputy and separate and apart from any and all workshops for the blind.
- (4) That the manager and at least 50 percent of the administrative staff of the State Sales Agency and all of the salesmen be properly qualified blind persons, and that the administrative costs of the agency be borne by the State.

2. *Assistance to Blind College Students*

- a. *Authorization*: Division 8, Chapter 1, Section 16091, Education Code.
- b. *Existing program*: This program was authorized by the Legislature in 1913. It is carried on by the Director of Advanced Studies at the California School for the Blind in Berkeley. Any blind student eligible to attend a public or private college or university in California is eligible to receive the educational guidance, the college placement service, and the special reader service which this program provides. From the readers' fund a sum not to exceed \$600 per year may be allotted to each student. For the Fiscal Year 1950-51 the appropriation for this purpose was \$25,000.

During 1948-49 this program served 46 blind college students in 19 colleges in their preparation for independence and self-support in the professions and in business; during 1949-50 the number increased to 59 students in 23 colleges.

- c. *Suggestions for improvement*: The Director of Advanced Studies, who administers this program, reported that there was considerable difference of need for reader service among the blind college students; that this need varied according to

the courses taken and according to whether they were doing work on the graduate or undergraduate level. He recommended that Section 16091 of the Education Code be amended to permit greater flexibility of maximum allotment for reader service to fit the needs of individual students. The California Council for the Blind supported this recommendation.

3. *State Aid to Partially Self-supporting Blind Residents*

a. *Authorization*: Division 5, Chapter 3, Sections 3400-3482, Welfare and Institutions Code.

b. *Existing program*: This program was established by the Legislature in 1941 for the purpose of encouraging those blind adults who desired to achieve self-support and to thus become independent of State Aid.

The eligibility requirements are the same as for Aid to the Needy Blind (see page 15 of this report) except that:

- (1) A maximum of \$1,000 per year exempt income is allowed without deduction from the maximum grant of \$1,020 per year; 50 percent of all income above \$1,000 is deducted.
- (2) The person must have a reasonably adequate plan for self-support and give evidence that he is attempting to carry out that plan through a sincere and sustained effort.
- (3) If a person became blind while not a resident of this State, he must have been a resident of California continuously for at least 10 years immediately before applying for Aid to Partially Self-supporting Blind Residents. Exception: Blind persons who matriculate at an institution of higher learning in this State, for a degree or certificate, are eligible if they have been residents of California for five out of the last nine years, the last one year of which must have been immediately preceding the date of application.

The number of recipients for April, 1950, was 559.

The assistance expenditures were reported as:

	April, 1950	Estimated for 1950-51 Fiscal Year
State -----	\$39,581	\$510,050
County -----	7,893	101,950
Total -----	\$47,474	\$612,000

The State Department of Social Welfare which administers this program reported that as of June 30, 1949, a total of 993 blind men and women in 43 counties had been granted aid; that of this number there were 316 or 32 percent whose state aid had been discontinued for three months or longer; that, in addition to the tremendous satisfaction gained by these blind persons, the program is effecting an estimated annual saving of more than \$300,000 in the expenditure of state and county funds.

- c. *Suggestions for improvement:* There were no criticisms of this program by those who testified before the committee. There was general agreement that the program was sound in principle and well administered. It was the hope of all concerned that the program could be further developed to include a larger percent of blind persons; that the Federal Government would share in its support.

SUMMARY: In California the responsibility for carrying on the state program to assist blind adults to achieve economic independence is shared by the State Department of Education and the State Department of Social Welfare.

The services of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Education are supported partly from state and partly from federal funds. During the Fiscal Year 1948-49 the bureau through its seven district offices served 394 visually handicapped adults of whom 203 were placed in gainful employment. Of these 203, 66 percent were less than 41 years old.

In hearings before the committee representatives of the blind and of the State Department of Education agreed that the number of self-supporting blind persons in California could and should be at least doubled; that to accomplish this there is need for:

Arrangements for the prompt discovery of recently blinded adults.

The establishment of one or more residential centers to give intensive orientation and prevocational training to blind persons who give promise of achieving self-support.

The employment of an increased number of vocational rehabilitation officers for the blind.

Suggestions for improving the vocational rehabilitation services offered to blind adults included the following: that facilities be found or developed for more intensive vocational training by teachers skilled in work with the blind; that the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation increase its efforts to find a wider variety of jobs for blind persons; that the present blind stand program be expanded to include other opportunities for private business enterprise; that a loan fund be made available to supply initial capital to blind persons who desire to start small shops or business ventures; that the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation set up training classes to prepare blind persons for various types of salesmanship.

A special service to assist blind college students to prepare themselves for professions and business enterprise is administered by the California School for the Blind. This service includes educational guidance, college placement, and reader assistance. During the Fiscal Year 1949-50, 59 students were served. There was no criticism of this program. The only improvement suggested was that by amendment of Section 16091 of the Education Code there could be greater flexibility in allotting the reader fund to fit the varying needs of individual students.

In 1941 the Legislature established a special aid program to encourage those blind adults who desired to achieve self-support. Under this program a blind person, while he progresses toward self-support,

is permitted to retain his earnings up to \$1,000 per year without having his State Aid reduced. When his earnings exceed that amount a sum equal to one-half of this excess is deducted from his State Aid.

This program is supervised by the State Department of Social Welfare and is administered by the county welfare boards. Since July 1, 1941, a total of 993 blind persons have qualified for this type of assistance. Of these, 32 percent have achieved self-support and their State Aid has been discontinued. This constitutes an estimated saving of more than \$300,000 per year in State Aid and county expenditures in addition to the tremendous satisfaction gained by these blind men and women.

No criticism of this Special Aid Program was presented to the committee. There were suggestions for its further development, and for securing federal support for it.

G. The Employment of Blind Persons in State-subsidized Workshops

There are in the United States approximately 107 special privately or publicly subsidized workshops for blind adults. In California there are at present one privately supported and three state-subsidized shops.

In the past, the commonly accepted purposes of such workshops have been:

- (1) To occupy the time of sightless persons.
- (2) To give blind persons the satisfaction of social participation.
- (3) To provide the blind with specially adapted opportunities for gainful employment.
- (4) To prepare blind persons for self-support in private industry. The success of many blind persons who found employment in war industries during World War II speeded up the gradual recognition that, with suitable training and appropriate placement, blind persons can achieve productive independence.

Thus far only a few of the blind persons who desire work in private industry or business have been able to find such employment. For those who cannot find a place the State offers limited work opportunities in its three workshops for the blind at Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

The information which the committee gathered concerning each of these workshops is reported below.

1. Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland.

- a. *Authorization:* Division 5, Chapter 2, Sections 3200-3261 Welfare and Institutions Code.
- b. *Historical background:* This institution was established in 1885 as the Industrial Home for Adult Blind, which accepted as residents blind men and women from all parts of California who were without any means of support and who wished to work. At that time, there was no emphasis upon training blind persons for employment in private industry. Such training as was given was for work at the home.

The blind persons who entered the home were, for the most part, elderly and expected to remain as residents for as long as they desired, and to have maintenance and care when they became unable to work.

The wording of the law under which the home was established and operated indicates clearly that while the Legislature wished the institution to be as nearly self-supporting as possible, there was no real expectancy that it could be operated without state subsidy.

Prior to 1945 this institution was administered by the Department of Institutions. In 1945 it was transferred to the Department of Education and the name was changed to *Training Center for Adult Blind*. The transfer and the change of title indicated the intention of the Legislature to change the principal emphasis of the program at this institution from *care and welfare* to *education* for independent self-support. However, since the shop workers, the staff, the facilities, and the pressure to make the institution as nearly self-supporting as possible all remained the same, very little progress has been made toward the changed emphasis which the Legislature desired.

During World War II, the work opportunities were greatly increased by a continuous series of orders from the Federal Government. These orders accounted for the major part of the increase in sales from \$131,583 for the 1940-1941 Fiscal Year to a high of \$611,141 for the 1944-1945 Fiscal Year. After this date, the volume of sales dropped abruptly with the decline in Federal Government orders.

Since the beginning of the Korean War, orders in volume have again been placed by the Federal Government. This accounts for the major part of the anticipated increase in sales for the 1950-1951 Fiscal Year (see graph of sales by fiscal year, page 49).

As a result of the sale of products for less than the cost of manufacture and as a result of a decrease in the value of inventories, the considerable surplus which was built up from sales during the World War II years was rapidly depleted in the immediate years following the war and became a deficit. This deficit has been financed from the working capital of the manufacturing fund (see graph of net profit and loss by fiscal year, page 52).

- c. *The Existing Program:* At present the shop workers number approximately 151, of whom 78 are residents in the institution and 73 are day workers who live in the adjacent community. The resident workers receive no other state aid; of the day workers approximately 50 percent are recipients of Aid to the Partially Self-supporting Blind under Chapter 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

Among these blind persons, there is wide variation of readiness to work. Some are eager to work 40 hours or more each week; some are able or prefer to work only part of the time; a few are capable of working only a few hours a week.

For many years the manufacturing operations at the Training Center for Adult Blind have been limited to the types of production traditionally approved as suitable for partially dependent blind workers. About 56 percent of the workers are engaged in the operations of the broom shop, which is the largest of its kind west of Chicago. About 36 percent work in the

sewing department. A few are engaged in leather work, rubber mat assembly, or special projects.

The work opportunities offered by the shop depend upon the market for the products. The principal sales outlets are through:

- (1) Contract orders with the Federal Government.
- (2) Orders from wholesalers and jobbers.
- (3) Orders from wholesale and retail salesmen who are blind.
- (4) The retail sales room at the Training Center.
- (5) Special cooperative sales carried on by the Lions Clubs.

The State provides the site and both the residential and manufacturing facilities for this agency, which is located on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland. In addition to the real property, the State pays all of the cost of operating the residential facility and subsidizes the manufacturing operation by paying the cost of certain functions and providing working capital for the manufacturing fund. The other costs of manufacturing are paid from the sale of the products produced.

The present item allocation of functions supported by the State and those paid by the manufacturing fund is as follows:

<i>Item of expense</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Paid from Manufacturing fund</i>
1. Administrative, general office and storekeeping costs-----	xxx	
2. Dining room expense-----	xxx	
3. Costs of operation of buildings and grounds-----		
(a) Rent -----	xxx	
(b) Light, heat and power-----	xxx	
(c) Maintenance and upkeep (Except production equipment) -----	xxx	
(d) Janitorial service -----	xxx	
4. Equipment		
(a) Office equipment -----	xxx	
(b) Recreation equipment -----	xxx	
(c) Dining room equipment-----	xxx	
(d) Maintenance equipment -----	xxx	
(e) Automotive equipment for administration-----	xxx	
(f) Automotive equipment for merchandising and manufacturing -----		xxx
(g) Production equipment -----		xxx
(h) Maintenance of production equipment-----		xxx
5. Reserves for depreciation on production equipment -----		xxx
6. Costs of materials for production-----		xxx
7. Salaries of blind and handicapped workers engaged in production-----		xxx
8. Salaries of shop superintendents-----	xxx	
9. Salaries of instructors and foremen-----		xxx
10. Merchandising costs -----		xxx
11. Truck operations for merchandising and manufacturing -----		xxx

This basis of allocation of costs between state support and the manufacturing fund, as indicated in the above table, was made uniform for all three shops July 1, 1949. Previous to that time, there was a variance among the shops of those functions supported by the State and the costs which were paid from the sale of products produced.

For the 1950-51 Fiscal Year, the total authorized budget for support of both residential operation and manufacturing operation is \$221,710. *The subsidy provided the manufacturing operation and the breakdown of cost by function is as follows:*

1. Administration, general office and storekeeping costs	
Salaries -----	\$19,886.00*
Operating expense -----	2,337.00*
2. Dining room expense	
3. Cost of operation of building and grounds	
a. Rent -----	--
b. Heat, light and power -----	6,000.00*
c. Maintenance and upkeep -----	2,014.00*
d. Janitorial service -----	6,980.00†
4. Equipment	
a. Office equipment -----	1,698.00*
b. Recreation -----	--
c. Dining room -----	--
d. Maintenance -----	125.00*
e. Automotive (for administration) -----	--
5. Salaries of shop superintendents -----	4,211.00*

Total, Training Center for Adult Blind, Oakland \$43,251.00

* One-half of T.C.A.B. support costs in these items were allocated as Mfg. fund share of expense to indicate amount of subsidy provided.

† Janitorial cost is actual janitor salaries for the function maintenance and operation.

- d. *Suggestions for Improvement:* In testimony before the Interim Committee, resident workers and day workers, as well as representatives of organizations for the blind, were insistent that the number of sighted civil service employees and the number of sighted workers in the shop was greater than necessary; that since this was an institution for the benefit of blind persons, it should be the policy of the Department of Education to fill as many of the civil service positions as possible with qualified blind adults; that the use of otherwise handicapped but sighted workers in the shop, where they sometimes perform duties which might be performed by the blind, was undesirable and should be discontinued.

The Department of Education, the representatives of the California Council for the Blind, and the blind workers in the workshop agreed that with but few exceptions blind workers do not receive take home pay comparable to that received by sighted workers in comparable industries. It was pointed out in this connection that the shop workers are not protected by the minimum wage laws, nor do they receive benefits of unemployment insurance, disability insurance, specified vacations with pay, nor of sick leave.

One resident worker suggested that there should be a minimum of \$2 per day for each resident worker. Another suggested that the minimum for resident workers be \$3 per day, and for day workers \$4 per day. Several of the workers argued that pay should be closely related to cost of living needs; others emphasized the proposal that blind workers at the shop be paid for a full day's work the same amount which is paid to sighted workers for similar effort. A few stated frankly that what they desired was more pay regardless of how it was justified.

The chairman and two members of the Board of Directors of the Training Center, supported by a considerable number of the shop workers, expressed emphatic dissatisfaction with the policies and methods used by the Department of Education in the administration of this institution.

They charged that the department was incompetent in this special field; that the Sacramento office had interfered in administrative functions which belonged to and could be better handled by the Board of Directors and the Superintendent of the Training Center; that the department was attempting to make the workshop completely self-supporting even though this might require reducing the rate of pay for the workers; that the department had delayed unnecessarily the construction of the Industrial Trades Building which the Legislature had authorized.

They suggested that it would be advantageous to the blind shop workers to transfer the jurisdiction over the Training Center to some other state department or to a special commission directly responsible to the Governor.

In discussing these charges the representatives of the Department of Education pointed out that they recognized the responsibility for administering the workshop to serve the best interests of all the blind persons involved in the program; that they had the further responsibility of working within the budget authorized for this operation; that it was not a question of making the workshop self-supporting but rather a question of improving the efficiency of operation so that the blind adults might enjoy more and better opportunities for work and might receive a larger share of the income from sales.

The department has been trying to effect greater efficiency through:

- (1) The establishment of a cost accounting system such as is used in any well-run production operation.
- (2) The reduction of unnecessary inventories of raw materials and finished goods.
- (3) The improvement of operational methods and conditions.
- (4) The greater diversification of work opportunities.
- (5) The improvement of the workers' morale.
- (6) The establishment of a state-wide sales organization.

The department feels that in this effort it has not received full cooperation from the Board of Directors and the Superintendent of the Training Center.

The Department of Education stated that the completion of plans for the Industrial Trades Building had been deliberately delayed pending the completion of the study of the program for adult blind by the legislative interim committee.

One of the official representatives of the blind workers and several persons who were, or had been employed in the broom shop testified that over a period of many years the

broom corn purchased had been of poor quality; that money had been wasted on the construction of impractical machinery and upon the rental of machines which were not used for many months; that supervision of workers in the broom shop had been lax.

The Department of Education reported that for the same volume of production the number of workers employed in the broom shop operations at the Training Center was approximately three times the number employed in certain other comparable broom shops.

An experienced salesman, who had been a resident at the Training Center, urged that purchases of raw materials for the workshop should be made by a person able to recognize first-class materials and fair prices.

He urged, also, that greater attention be given to suitable and attractive packaging of finished products for commercial merchandising.

It was agreed by all concerned that *steady work* opportunity was essential for the blind day workers and highly desirable for the resident workers; that the program of production and merchandising should be planned and operated to achieve this steady work opportunity.

Among the shop workers who testified there was wide difference of opinion regarding pay rate differentials as between resident workers and nonresident workers. The day workers felt that, since they received no free maintenance and care, they should be paid at a higher rate; the resident workers felt that benefits of state aid open only to the day workers were equal in value to the benefits of maintenance and care, and that, therefore, the pay rate should be the same for both groups.

The Department of Education reported that it is now working on this problem; that a careful study is being made in consultation with a committee of shop workers; that a definite and consistent pay scale has been adopted. This pay scale will be reviewed from time to time and changed as experience may indicate and as returns from sales may permit.

There was very general agreement among the blind workers who testified that there was no systematic program of orientation, prevocational training, nor vocational training at the Training Center for Adult Blind; that the occasional cooperation with the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation in giving work experience at the Training Center was incidental to production of salable goods.

2. *Industrial Workshop for the Blind, Los Angeles*

- a. *Authorization*: Division 5, Chapter 2, Sections 3300-3352, Welfare and Institutions Code.
- b. *Historical background*: This shop was established in 1929 under the State Department of Institutions. It was transferred to the Department of Education in 1945.

Starting with 39 workers, an operating staff of four persons and a capital revolving fund of \$20,000 in 1930, the program was gradually expanded during the next 12 years.

After Pearl Harbor the workshop secured large contracts from the Federal Government to supply pillow cases and mattresses. It also assisted in placing over 100 visually handicapped persons in war industries. With the abrupt cessation of government orders near the end of World War II, the volume of gross sales, which had reached \$67,000 for December, 1943, and \$513,901 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1944, fell off sharply. Primarily through the manufacture of new types of products and the introduction of assembly work on a subcontract basis, the volume of sales, began to climb again in 1947 to reach a peak of \$541,989 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1949. This was \$28,000 above the peak war year. (See graph of sales by fiscal year, page 47).

Wages of blind and handicapped workers did not drop correspondingly with the drop in sales volume after July 1, 1944, although they did decline from the 1944-1945 Fiscal Year to the 1946-1947 Fiscal Year. With the increase in the scope of the workshop program to include assembly and processing contracts, wages increased from \$72,043 for the 1946-1947 Fiscal Year to \$176,078 for the 1948-1949 Fiscal Year. This was \$87,827 more than was paid for wages in the peak war year. (See graph of pay rolls by fiscal year, page 53).

The gain which had accrued largely as a result of war time sales has been gradually increased during succeeding years. (See graph of net profit and loss by fiscal year, page 50).

- c. *The Existing Program:* At present, the shop workers number approximately 210; all workers live in the Los Angeles area. About 43 percent are recipients of Aid to the Partially Self-supporting Blind under Chapter 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

The majority of the blind workers are willing to work 40 hours a week, although many prefer a seven-hour work day because traffic hazards are less for blind people at an early closing hour. A few are able or prefer to work only part of the time.

The management of this shop has pioneered among the state workshops in developing diverse types of manufacturing operations and the growth of the shop has been largely attributable to the manufacture of many products not traditionally associated with blind activities. Approximately 65 different articles are manufactured or assembled. Traditional blind made items manufactured here are rugs, brushes, baskets, rubber mats and leather goods. Some of the items assembled or packaged have included garden seeds, plastic animal toys, oil can spouts, baby crib rods, Stay Neet Home barber combs, and plastic picnic eating utensils for picnic baskets.

In February, 1950, the shop moved into new quarters at 840 Santee Street, Los Angeles. Adequate facilities are now

available for the warehousing of raw materials and finished goods and production opportunities for a larger number of blind workers than heretofore has been possible.

The workshop products are sold in several ways. The principal sales outlets are:

- (1) Contract orders with the Federal Government.
- (2) Orders from wholesalers and jobbers including independent distributors.

The military action in Korea and the increase in defense expenditures by the Federal Government has brought a large volume of orders for pillow cases, surgical drapes, sterile wrappers and innerspring mattresses, and it is estimated the sales for the 1950-1951 Fiscal Year will approximate \$920,000. It is anticipated that this increase in sales will result in a pay roll of over \$300,000. (See graph of pay rolls by fiscal year, page 53).

For the 1950-51 Fiscal Year, the subsidy provided the manufacturing operation and the breakdown of cost by function is as follows:

1. Administration, general office and storekeeping costs	
Salaries and wages-----	\$43,112
Operating expense -----	5,150
2. Dining room expense-----	1,023
3. Cost of operation of building and grounds	
a. Rent -----	111,933 *
b. Heat, light and power-----	5,100
c. Maintenance and upkeep-----	12,170
d. Janitorial services -----	13,420
4. Equipment	
a. Office equipment -----	1,825
b. Recreation -----	---
c. Dining room -----	750
d. Maintenance -----	278
e. Automotive (for administration) -----	---
5. Salaries of shop superintendents-----	3,964
Total, industrial workshop for the blind-----	\$198,725

* This item of cost does not appear in the cost of operation of the other workshops. For purposes of comparison the operational cost of this shop should be taken as \$86,792.

- d. *Suggestions for improvement:* In response to direct questions by the committee the manager of this workshop testified that he was satisfied with the plans and policies of the Department of Education and that in his opinion the administration of the several workshops should remain a function of that department. The representatives of the shop workers and the leaders of the blind concurred in this opinion.

Through their representatives the visually handicapped workers complained that the proportion of *sighted* handicapped workers was too large, and that this reduced the work opportunities for blind persons.

The manager testified that certain manufacturing and assembly projects which gave employment to blind persons could not be carried on without the participation of some sighted persons.

He also said he had found that, in persuading employers of the feasibility of employing blind workers with sighted workers, an actual demonstration at the workshop was more convincing than talking about it; that through such demonstrations quite a number of blind workers had been placed in private industry.

The testimony before the committee supported the contention of the state leaders of the blind that the workshop program is, primarily, a program to give remunerative employment to blind persons at the workshop rather than to prepare them for participation in private industry or business.

A blind man who has established an independent shop and who employs 28 visually handicapped workers gave it as his opinion that to make the program at the workshop a *training for placement outside the workshop* would require:

- (1) Intensive, detailed, individual instruction by a skilled teacher in production of standard quality goods.
- (2) Supervised practice to give speed of production equal to that of the average sighted worker.
- (3) Training in steady production eight hours a day, five days a week.

The manager and the instructors at the Industrial Workshop for the Blind reported that to improve the efficiency of the present operations and to provide opportunities for an increased number of blind workers there is need to replace worn-out and old equipment and to purchase additional new equipment; that if this were done work opportunities could be offered to at least 150 blind persons who are now on the waiting list.

The representatives of the shop workers concurred in this request.

Approximately \$20,000 worth of new equipment has been purchased and installed since the hearings were held in Los Angeles.

The California Council for the Blind criticized the recent arrangement of the Department of Education whereby a rehabilitation officer from the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation is carrying out some of the functions of a personnel officer at the Industrial Workshop in Los Angeles. The council feels that this is a step in the wrong direction; that the bureau staff is insufficient to carry on its primary function of placing blind persons in private business or industry; that recruitment and processing of personnel for state-subsidized workshops is not a proper function of the bureau.

The Department of Education explained that this is a temporary arrangement which facilitates the coordination of the existing field work services, rehabilitation services and workshop opportunities; that when orientation centers are established the arrangement will be modified.

3. *The State Blind Shop at San Diego*

- a. *Authorization:* Division 5, Chapter 2, Sections 3300-3352, Welfare and Institutions Code.
- b. *Historical Background:* This workshop was first established in 1932 by the San Diego Braille Club without any support from public funds. In 1937 the Legislature authorized state support and it was formally opened under its present title in 1938. There were 12 workers engaged in chair caning, basket weaving and rug weaving.

In 1940 the workshop started making mops and swabs to fill Federal Government orders and by 1942 these constituted 94 percent of its total output. During the 1945 calendar year the gross sales to the armed forces amounted to \$967,000 and in March of that year the monthly pay roll reached a peak of \$10,616 distributed among 52 blind and handicapped workers. It was reported that none of the 52 received any state aid.

Following World War II, when Federal Government orders were greatly reduced, the shop continued to limit its production to mops and swabs; but, without established sales outlets of its own, it found difficulty in disposing of its products in the competitive market at a price which permitted a fair return to the blind workers. Even with a reduction in the number of workers from over 40 to less than 30 there was insufficient work for full-time employment of those who remained. During the period from 1946 to 1949 more than half of the workers became recipients of Aid to the Blind under Chapter 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

- c. *The Existing Program:* There are approximately 40 factory workers at this shop at the present time. The majority of these workers are desirous of working a full schedule of 40 hours per week, but there are some who are not able or do not wish to work full time. About 57 percent are recipients of Aid to the Partially Self-Supporting Blind under Chapter 3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

The sales of the Fiscal Year 1949-50 amounted to \$404,910. Of this total 95.5 percent was in wet mops and swabs, 1.5 percent was for rubber mats, 0.9 percent was for the sale of leather goods and 2.1 percent was for miscellaneous production. It can be seen from these data that the opportunity for providing employment has depended almost entirely upon the sales possibility of wet mops and swabs. The sales outlets for these products in the past and at present is primarily to the Federal Government. (For a review of the trend in sales volume see graph of sales by fiscal year, page 48).

In order to afford a more diversified work opportunity and to avoid the cyclical fluctuations present in the dependence upon federal orders, plans have been made to establish production of feather dusters and wire wound brushes. Equipment for this production has been purchased.

For the 1950-51 Fiscal Year, the subsidy provided by the State for the manufacturing operation, and the breakdown of the cost by function is as follows:

1. Administration, general office and storekeeping costs	
Salaries and wages-----	\$22,106.00
Operating expense-----	2,518.00
2. Dining room expense-----	275.00
3. Cost of operation of building and grounds	
a. Rent-----	3,600.00
b. Heat, light and power-----	1,500.00
c. Maintenance and upkeep-----	250.00
d. Janitorial service-----	4,560.00
4. Equipment	
a. Office equipment-----	895.00
b. Recreation-----	--
c. Dining room-----	--
d. Maintenance-----	--
e. Automotive (for administration)-----	--
5. Salary of shop superintendent-----	4,512.00
<hr/>	
Total, State Blind Shop, San Diego-----	\$40,216.00

- d. *Suggestions for Improvement*: In his testimony before the committee, the Manager of the State Blind Shop at San Diego stated that he was not completely satisfied with the policies and procedures of the Department of Education; that, in his opinion, a recent work stoppage at the shop was due to the department's policy of limiting the raw materials inventory too severely; that he favored merchandising the shop's products through a well-established sales agency rather than through blind salesmen under a state agency.

Answering a direct question from the committee he stated that, in his opinion, there were very few employable blind persons in the San Diego area who were not already working in the workshop.

The two representatives of the shop workers stated that what they wanted was work and not charity; that they wanted full-time employment at fair wages; that they favored greater diversification of work opportunities to fill in with at times when the demand for mops and swabs was insufficient to keep the workers busy.

They pointed out the fact that as blind workers they do not have the security provisions of unemployment benefits, retirement benefits, or sick leave benefits.

They stated that there were a good many blind persons in the San Diego area who would welcome the opportunity to do remunerative work at the shop if the volume and diversity of work were increased.

The owner of a sales agency which sells the products made at the State Blind Shop and at the Training Center for Adult Blind in Oakland testified that he employs 64 salesmen in California and other Western States; that of the 45 salesmen he employs in California seven are blind persons; that merchandising of blind-made products cannot be successfully carried on by a staff composed of blind persons exclusively.

SUMMARY: In California there are three state-subsidized workshops for blind adults. These shops are located in Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Prior to 1945 these shops were administered by the State Department of Institutions; since 1945 by the State Department of Education.

Prior to 1940 there was a total of approximately 140 workers in the three shops. These workers were engaged in making brooms, mops, leather goods, rugs, baskets, rubber mats; in hand and machine sewing, chair caning, and other hand work traditionally done by the blind.

During World War II the shops concentrated upon filling Federal Government orders for brooms, mops, swabs, pillow cases, surgical dressings, and mattresses. The number of blind and handicapped workers reached a peak of 315. Pay rates were increased, the volume of sales reached \$1,906,319 for the 1944-1945 Fiscal Year. The total pay roll for workers for this same period totaled \$293,376.

From 1945 to 1948 all three shops passed through a difficult period of postwar adjustment. Government orders were greatly reduced. The articles which had been sold to the government during the war could not compete in the open market. Nevertheless the shops at Oakland and San Diego continued to limit their production to these articles. The shop at Los Angeles began to develop other products and other kinds of work. In all three shops the volume of work fell off, sales declined, the number of workers decreased, the hours of work offered the workers were curtailed, and the take-home pay for most of the workers was reduced.

At present the number and aid status of the workers at the three shops is as follows:

	<i>Number</i>	<i>On state aid</i>	<i>Not on state aid</i>
Oakland	151	113 *	38
Los Angeles	210	90	120
San Diego	40	23	17
	<hr/> 401	<hr/> 226	<hr/> 175

* The resident workers are included in this number.

The authorized state budgets for the three facilities for 1950-51 are:

	<i>Residential care</i>	<i>Workshop operation</i>	<i>Total</i>
Oakland	\$178,459	\$43,251	\$221,710
Los Angeles	None	86,792 *	86,792
San Diego	None	40,216	40,216
Total	\$178,459	\$170,259	\$348,718

* See note on page 32.

The volume of sales during 1949-50 for the three shops was:

Oakland	\$353,177
Los Angeles	422,658
San Diego	404,910
	<hr/> \$1,180,745

The Oakland shop and the San Diego shop continue to limit their production primarily to the few articles produced during World War II; in the Los Angeles shop production has been much more diversified and has been geared more closely to normal commercial markets.

In testimony to the committee the representatives of the blind workers, the leaders of the blind, the local advisory boards, and the Department of Education agreed:

- (1) That the preparation of blind adults for employment in private industry or business has not been and probably cannot be successfully carried on at state-subsidized workshops for the blind.
- (2) That for such workshops the primary aim should be to develop a diversified work program which is suited to blind workers, and which will permit them to contribute substantially to their own support through uninterrupted work at a fair wage rate.
- (3) That in each workshop there should be a representative committee of workers with whom the department of education and the manager should consult concerning matters which affect the workers.
- (4) That insofar as possible blind workers in the workshops should share in the unemployment, disability, retirement, and sick leave benefits which the federal and state laws provide for sighted workers in private industry.

The representatives of the workers, and the California Council for the Blind, were of the opinion that the best interests of the visually handicapped would be served by placing blind persons in some of the positions now occupied by sighted civil service employees and by persons with nonvisual physical handicaps.

The Department of Education stated that it would agree to the application of this policy to any position connected with a workshop whenever it could be applied without curtailing the work opportunities or the earnings for blind workers at that shop.

The managers of the shops and the representatives of the workers recommended the replacement of the worn-out or obsolete manufacturing equipment now in use at the shops with new modern equipment, and provision for the purchase of additional tools and machines which would increase the volume and diversification of work opportunities for blind workers.

Three members of the board of directors of the Training Center for Adult Blind, in Oakland, suggested that the best interest of the blind shop workers would be served by transferring the workshops from the jurisdiction of the Department of Education to another state department or to a commission directly responsible to the Governor. A considerable number of the workers in the Oakland shop concurred in this suggestion.

The workers' representatives at the shops in Los Angeles and San Diego and the advisory board for the San Diego shop went on record as favoring continued administration by the Department of Education.

The advisory board for the State Blind Shop, at San Diego, formally recommended that the Department of Education establish a states sales unit to organize and control the merchandising of products made or assembled at the several shops; that in organizing this sales unit every effort be made to give employment to blind persons.

The manager of the San Diego shop and the manager of a private sales agency agreed in the opinion that more effective merchandising service would be achieved by distribution through a well established private sales agency which would handle goods made by sighted workers in private industry as well as goods made by blind workers in the state-subsidized workshops.

SECTION II

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMMITTEE

Changes in the Blind Population

The adult blind population of California has increased as the general population has grown. This increase has been accelerated during the last 10 years because during that period California's increase has amounted to approximately one-fifth of the total national census gain.

Although the number of blind persons per thousand of general population *under 50 years of age* has been definitely reduced by more effective prevention of blindness and more effective restoration of sight, this has been offset by a marked increase in the relative number of blind persons *over 50 years old* because loss of visual acuity occurs with greater frequency during old age.

Thus in appraising the state program for blind adults, it is necessary to consider not only its *adequacy* to serve the total number who are alike in being blind, but also its *appropriateness* to meet the desires and needs of persons who differ widely in characteristics which are primarily determined by age. The fact that at least 75 percent of our blind citizens are over 50 years old must be borne in mind in our planning.

Changes in the Attitude Toward Blindness

During the first half of this century and more especially within the last 20 years, the leaders among the blind have brought about a marked change in the attitude of our citizens toward blindness and what can be done about it. These leaders have insisted that, if given the chance, there are as many among the blind as among any other assorted group who can be active, productive, independent, and socially useful members of their community. They do not want pity or charity because they are blind, but rather the opportunity to develop their remaining faculties and abilities so that they can travel, work, compete, and enjoy life much as other people do, or as they did before they lost their sight.

In California, as elsewhere, this new emphasis has gained and is still gaining acceptance, but the long-established custom of treating all blind persons as dependents is hard to uproot and tends to persist in the special arrangements which the State has made for blind adults and in the attitude of employers toward them.

The committee is convinced that in making long range plans every possible effort should be made to assist those blind adults who seek the opportunity for the full and productive way of living which the leaders of the blind advocate and exemplify.

The committee is convinced, also, that in any plans for the future suitable provisions should be made to continue and further develop the state program of aid and comfort for those blind adults who because of

age, infirmity, or other handicap, do not seek the active and complete rehabilitation which the more vigorous blind persons desire.

The Assignment of Administrative Responsibility for the Programs

The major responsibility for conducting the state program for adult blind persons in California is shared by three departments—Health, Social Welfare, and Education. In many other states, the pattern of administrative control is more centralized. In 1945, the Legislature raised the question whether “it may be deemed desirable for the Legislature to establish an agency of State Government to supervise and perform all functions of this State pertaining to its blind citizens.” (Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 41, 1945.)

In its report to the Legislature in 1945, the interdepartmental committee recommended against the establishment of a separate agency and the California Council for the Blind has concurred in this recommendation. Even prior to 1945, the several departments concerned had established a coordinating committee, and this committee has met every three months to facilitate effective cooperation among the three departments.

Nevertheless, the present interim committee is of the opinion that, for the development of a suitable long-range program, it may be desirable to establish closer coordination among the responsible agencies. This can be done through a coordinating council consisting of the Director of Education, the Director of Public Health, and the Director of Social Welfare. Such a council could coordinate promptly and effectively the various programs carried on by the several departments as they affect adult blind persons in the State. This arrangement would retain the present spread of administrative responsibility, which the leaders of the blind prefer, and would at the same time facilitate closer cooperation among the agencies involved.

Information for Blind Adults

In order to help persons when they lose their sight, it is necessary to know who they are and where they live so that they can be informed of what services are available to them. It was repeatedly brought to the attention of the committee that the effectiveness of the state program for the rehabilitation of blind adults would be materially increased *if it could be applied when these adults first became blind.*

Since information about the state program is not common knowledge, the Departments of Health, Social Welfare, and Education have cooperated in the preparation of a small pamphlet in which the services available to the blind are briefly described. For years this pamphlet has been distributed to public and private social welfare agencies throughout the State, but there is no way of knowing how many blind persons receive the information it contains. However, it is significant that of 750 blind men and women who requested home teacher service during a year's time, 91 percent had been blind for more than two years before they asked for this help.

At least three eastern states are reported to have passed laws making the reporting of blindness mandatory for physicians, optometrists, and other health agencies. This procedure has been recommended for

California, but the representatives of the State Department of Health do not believe that it would be effective unless it were actively supported by the state and county medical organizations.

Until such support can be developed, it would appear that the best plan is to distribute informative printed material to each eye physician and each optometrist with the request that he, or a member of his staff, urge blind patients to seek the services appropriate for them and for which they are eligible. The committee recommends that the Departments of Health, Education, and Social Welfare cooperate in establishing procedures which will assist newly blinded persons to secure promptly the services for which they are eligible.

THE STATE PROGRAM FOR THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

Although the California program for preventing blindness is well developed, there is still room for improvement. There is need to intensify research concerning prenatal causes of blindness, and causes associated with premature birth.

Through the continued cooperation of practicing physicians and public health officers the occurrence of blindness due to infectious disease can be further reduced.

Through the education of workers and managers in industrial operations, and through prompt reporting and treatment of eye injuries, blindness due to industrial accidents can be further reduced.

The prevention of blindness caused by accidents at home, on recreation fields, in nonindustrial work, and on streets and highways, requires continuous public education of children and adults and strict enforcement of safety regulations.

The committee recommends a further and more detailed study of the cases of blindness resulting from accidents, with a view to a more systematic effort to reduce the number caused by carelessness in the use of firearms, air guns, dynamite caps, and other explosives.

Probably the most significant reduction in number of persons who become blind each year in California could be achieved through the discovery and treatment of incipient chronic disease which leads to blindness and incipient degeneration of the eyes of middle-aged adults. The committee supports the recommendation of the Department of Public Health that a program of mass screening to detect these conditions be made available to the citizens of the State under the direction of public health authorities. It is the belief of the committee that through such means the number of persons who apply each year for Aid to the Blind could be significantly reduced.

THE STATE PROGRAM FOR THE RESTORATION OF SIGHT

The present program has yielded most encouraging results. Prompt reporting of cases feasible for restoration through operation, and closer coordination of the services now offered by the Departments of Social Welfare, Public Health, and Education (Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation) would result in increased saving to the State and would be priceless for the individual citizens whose sight was restored. The committee recommends the full development of this program.

THE STATE SERVICES WHICH SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ANY BLIND ADULT

The assistance rendered by the Department of Education through qualified field workers and home teachers for the blind should be promptly available to any blind adult who desires help in adjusting to daily living without sight. This assistance should be given by the State without regard to the economic status of the applicant or his family. The service offered should include training in such items of daily living as eating, dressing, cooking, moving from place to place in the house and in the neighborhood, use of Braille, use of talking books, participation in household activities, and appropriate handicrafts.

The committee recommends that the number of field workers and home teachers for the blind be adequate to supply these services promptly to blind adults, in rural as well as in urban areas, throughout the State.

ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY BLIND ADULTS

As compared to similar aid programs in other states the California program of Aid to the Needy Blind is liberal and well administered. The basic principles upon which it is operated appear to be sound. More than two-thirds of the recipients of this aid are over 65 years old. The cost of this program (estimated \$10,338,000 for 1950-51) is considerable and has been mounting steadily in direct ratio to the increase in the State's population.

The committee concurs in the belief expressed by the California Council for the Blind that the ratio of recipients of Aid to the Needy Blind to the total population can be reduced through the development of an intensive program of rehabilitation of recently blinded persons. In a later section of this report development of such a program is recommended.

The amount of aid which a needy blind person receives has not been increased to offset the fall in the purchasing value of the dollar. This has worked hardship upon many of the recipients, especially upon those who require rest home care. The committee recommends that in plans for the future special consideration be given to the needs of this latter group.

As regards the proposal that relatives of blind adults be legally excused from the responsibility of supporting such blind adults, the committee is of the opinion that any changes in the existing laws governing this matter should be made only after full consideration of policy regarding all groups of adults who apply for state aid.

ASSISTANCE TO PARTIALLY SELF-SUPPORTING BLIND ADULTS

From the evidence submitted the committee is convinced that among the blind in California there are at least a thousand persons who desire to achieve partial self-support through handicraft or light industry production but who, because of age or other disability, are not able to prepare for or engage in full-time productive work. Some of these men and women who live in urban or the more thickly settled suburban areas can be grouped at field centers for supervised light industry. Some of them must work in their homes with such facilities as can be set up there. Either of these two arrangements would contribute significantly to the self-respect

and happiness of the blind persons involved. In some cases the provision of this opportunity would free the State from any other aid cost. However, it is doubtful whether the costs thus saved would balance the expenditures necessary for maintaining the opportunity program.

For the present the committee recommends that such an opportunity program be established upon a trial basis in communities or areas where there is a local organization which will undertake to supply these blind citizens with the necessary light equipment and supplies for production, and which will also arrange for the local sale of the articles produced. Under such circumstances the field workers and home teachers employed by the State could assist the local organization to set up the means of assistance, and could instruct the blind workers in the specific skills which they require for the type of production selected. Where the number of blind workers who would use such an opportunity is 30 or more the State could establish and maintain a suitable field center for the blind such as that now in operation in San Jose.

ASSISTANCE TO BLIND ADULTS WHO WISH TO ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE AND FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Upon the basis of the available information the Department of Education estimates that of the 700 persons who are added each year to our adult blind population approximately 100 can be prepared for independent self-support if they are discovered promptly and given appropriate training by expert teachers.

To supply this special training will require the establishment of one or more orientation centers where blind adults who are determined to achieve maximum rehabilitation can receive intensive instruction and training for a period of from three to nine months.

The course of training offered at an orientation center should include:

- Techniques of daily living
- Techniques of travel
- Physical conditioning
- Sensory training
- Braille reading and writing
- Development of hand skills
- Typing
- Basic business principles and methods

The training for each trainee should be determined by his interests and experience, and by comprehensive tests of his vocational aptitudes. The trainee should be given guidance in his selection of an occupation in which he can succeed in spite of his handicap.

While a trainee is still at the orientation center a vocational rehabilitation officer should start preparing for him either an opportunity for specific vocational training, or an opportunity for occupational placement. After occupational placement has been made the rehabilitation officer should continue individual coaching on the job until the blind worker is well established and has achieved the operational efficiency requisite for success.

The instructional staff of each orientation center should be made up of persons who believe that the trainees can achieve social and economic independence and who have had successful experience in teaching blind persons. The staff should include as large a proportion as possible of visually handicapped persons who have achieved outstanding success in adjustment to their handicap.

Each orientation center should be established and operated as a unit separate and apart from any state-subsidized workshop, but its program should be closely coordinated with the services of the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, with the home teacher program, and with the program for training teachers and other personnel who will serve the blind.

THE STATE-SUBSIDIZED INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP PROGRAM FOR BLIND ADULTS

In the past the functions of these workshops has not been clearly defined. It has been assumed that they could carry on productive operations which would meet the needs (1) of blind persons who wished training for independent self-support, (2) of blind persons who wished permanent full-time work in a sheltered workshop, (3) of blind persons who wished part-time work under sheltered conditions to supplement State Aid.

In actual practice the workshops have contributed very little to the preparation of blind adults for independent self-support. The so-called "instructors" have served as foremen who trained blind persons for full-time or part-time work *in the workshops* and who supervised the production operations.

The inclusion in the work force of many individuals who could not or would not work full-time has interfered with the profitable production for a competitive market.

The dependence of the workshops upon Federal Government orders for a few products, and the wide fluctuations in the volume of these Federal Government orders, has resulted in wide variation in the work opportunity for the blind workers who desired full employment in the workshops. Sometimes work opportunity has been completely withdrawn for short periods, sometimes only part-time work opportunity has been offered for several months, sometimes rates of pay for blind workers have been reduced, and sometimes it has been necessary to sell the workshop products at an operating loss and to pay the workers from operating capital funds.

During the last three years the Department of Education in consultation with the Department of Finance and the Office of the Legislative Auditor has made a continuous and determined effort toward improving the industrial workshop program for the blind. A clearcut and uniform accounting separation between state support costs and manufacturing fund costs has been made. A cost accounting system which will give current information upon manufacturing costs, profits, and losses, has been established. The variety of products manufactured or assembled is being increased. The sales program for the blind-made goods has been standardized and is being developed under a State Sales Manager. The control of the manufacturing funds has been centralized in the department. The opportunities for civil service employment of qualified

blind adults at the workshops have been increased. Workshop committees of blind workers at the several shops have been established. More favorable contracts with the federal agencies have been secured for several items. Provisions for slight increases in pay rates for blind workers have been made.

The committee approves of these steps toward improvement. However, there is still much which can be done.

The committee recommends:

That the existing industrial workshops for the blind at Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego, and any additional such workshops that may be established in California, be organized, staffed and administered to serve adult blind persons who desire full-time industrial work without State Aid but who are unable to secure employment in private industry.

That the administrative control of these workshops be sufficiently centralized to permit of maximum efficiency in accounting, in the purchase of raw materials for production, and in merchandising, and to permit, also, of uniformity of practice in regard to wages, hours, and other matters affecting the workers.

That, insofar as possible, opportunity for participation in group life and health insurance, sick leave, and vacation benefits be extended to the blind workers in these workshops.

That work opportunities at these shops be diversified to permit of some choice by the workers, and to supply steady work in spite of unfavorable market conditions temporarily affecting specific lines of production.

That the State continue to provide the building and equipment facilities necessary for establishing and maintaining such workshops, and a support budget which will permit the Department of Education to secure an adequate administrative staff for each shop.

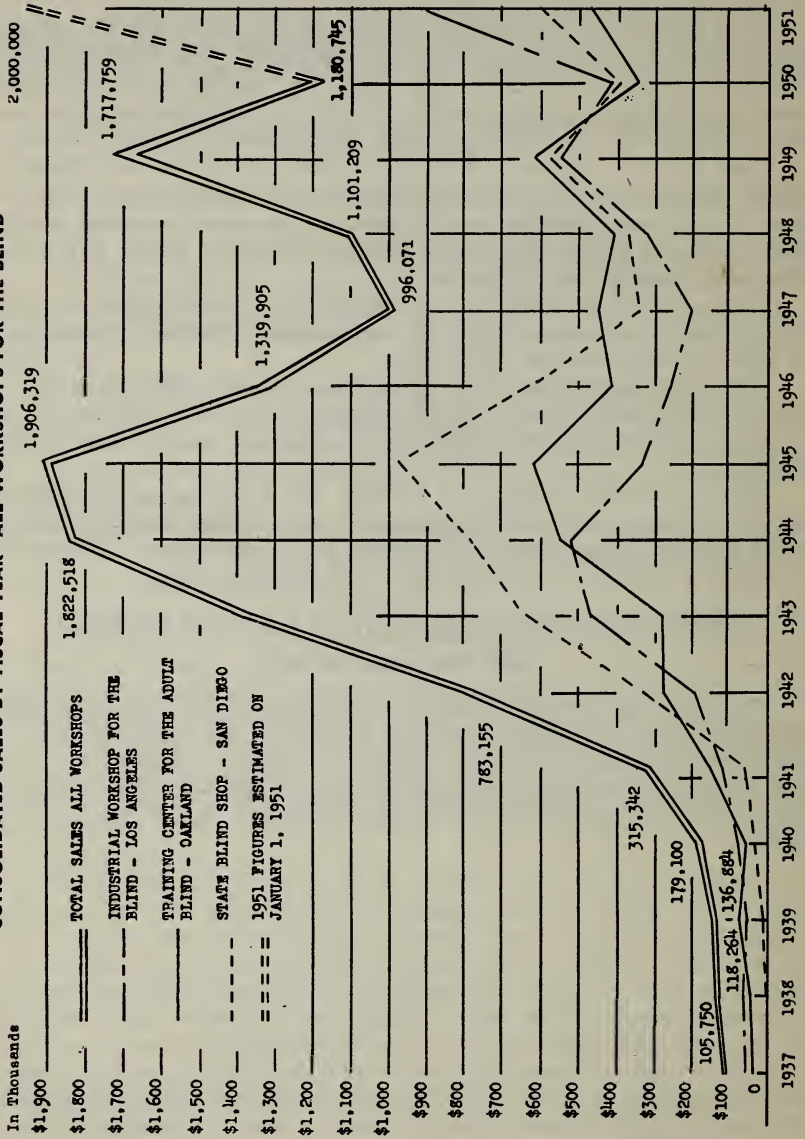
THE NEED FOR CONTINUED STUDY OF THE STATE PROGRAM FOR THE ADULT BLIND

The plans for the establishment of a sound program of assistance and opportunity for the blind citizens of California are not complete. The committee recommends that the present or a similar Joint Interim Committee be authorized by the Legislature to continue the study which has been made during the last two years and which is presented in this report.

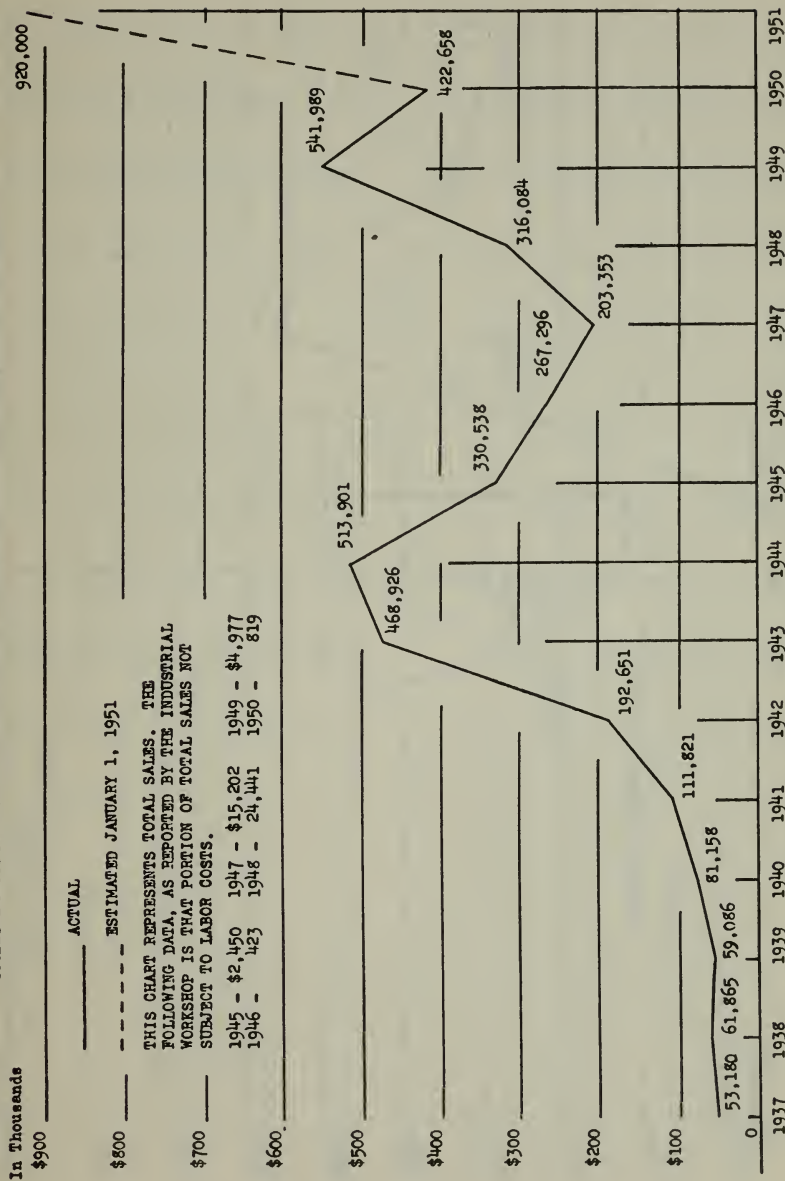
SECTION III

APPENDIX

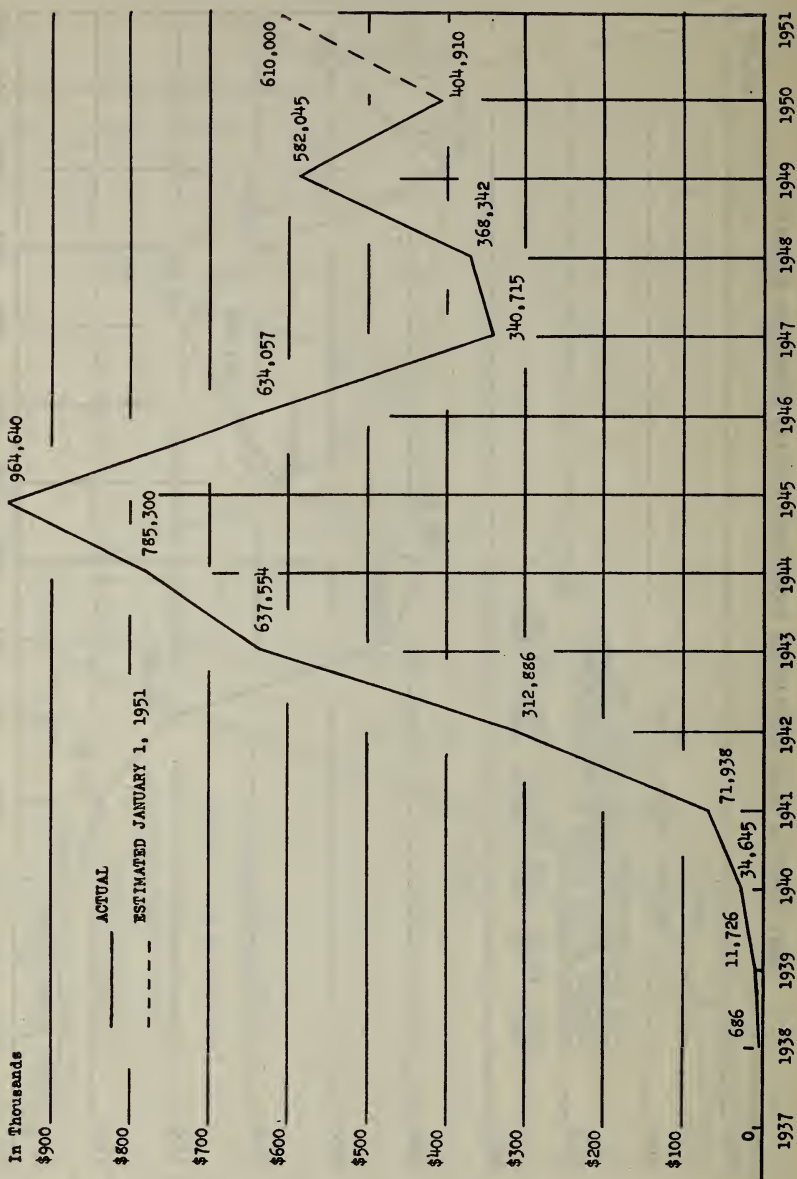
CONSOLIDATED SALES BY FISCAL YEAR—ALL WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND



SALES BY FISCAL YEAR—INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP FOR THE BLIND—LOS ANGELES

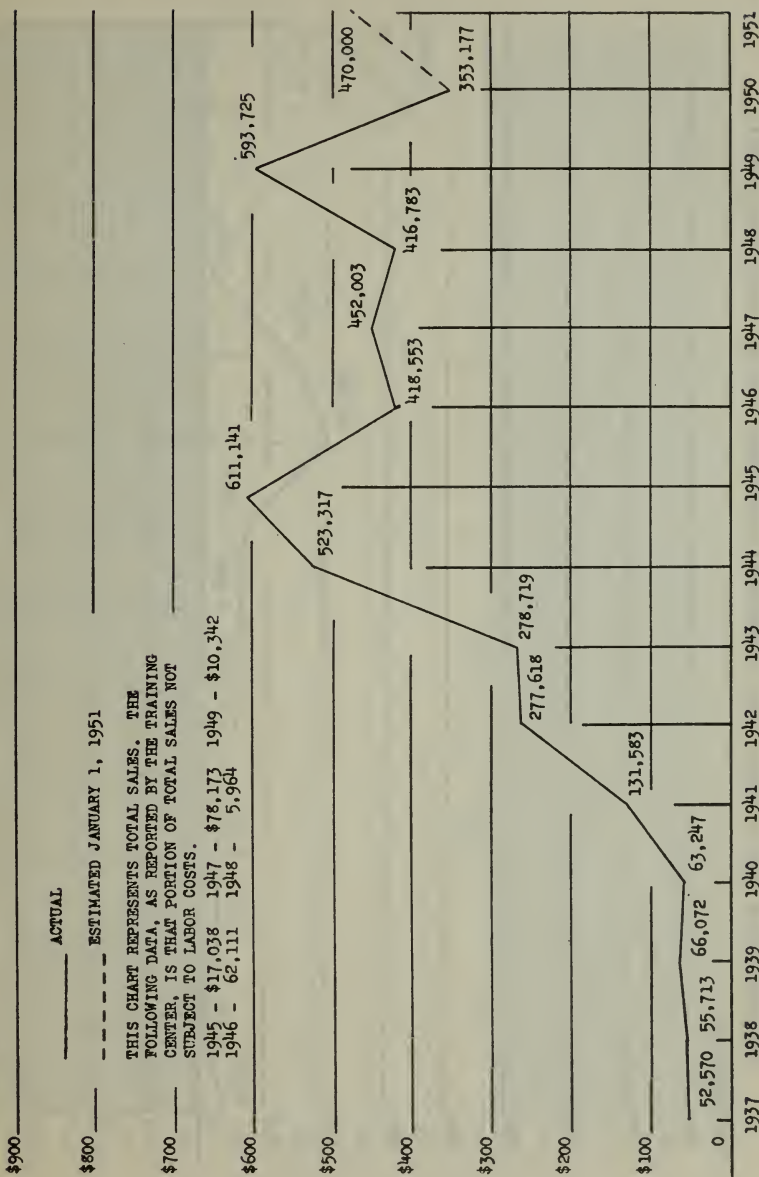


SALES BY FISCAL YEAR—STATE BLIND SHOP—SAN DIEGO

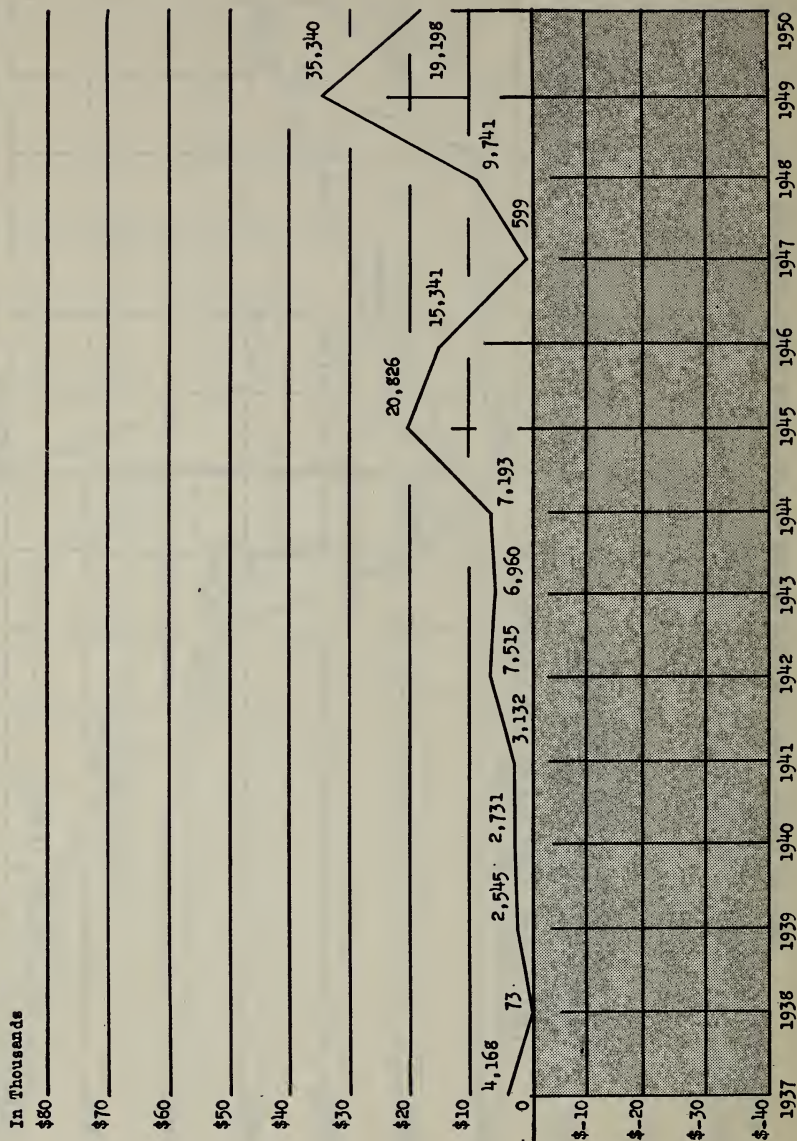


SALES BY FISCAL YEAR—TRAINING CENTER FOR THE ADULT BLIND—OAKLAND

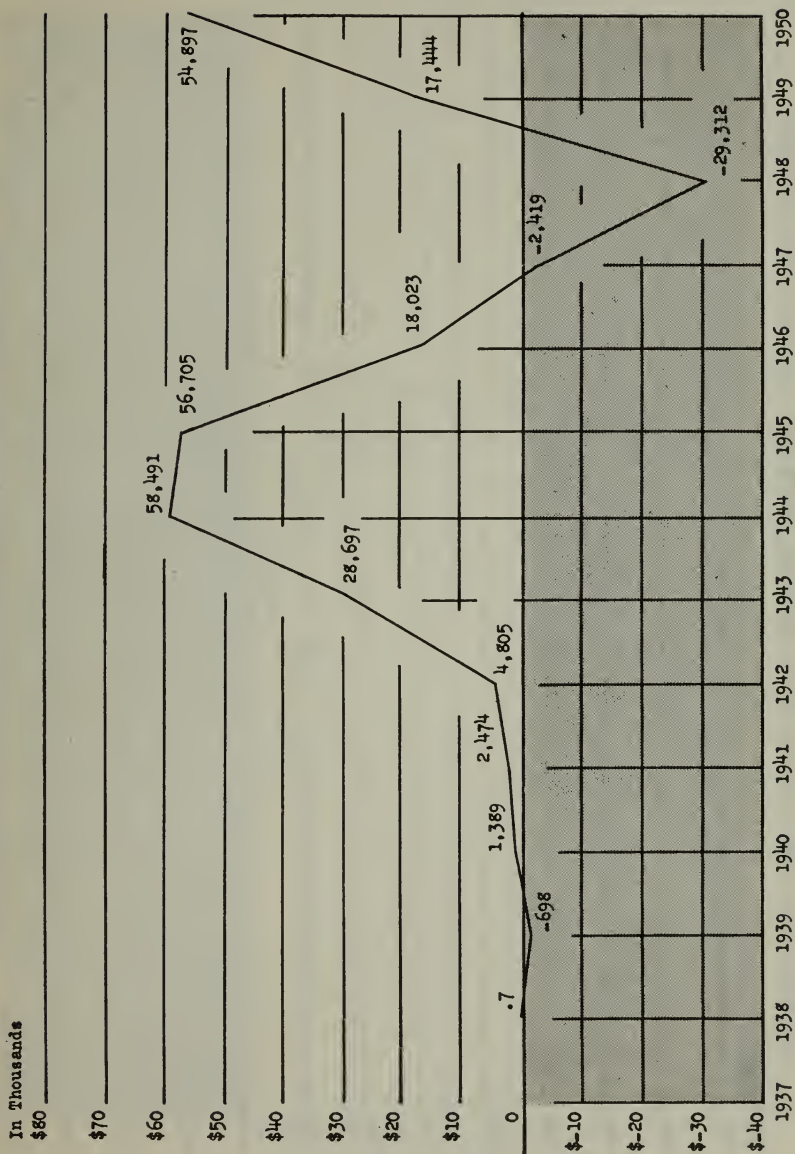
In Thousands



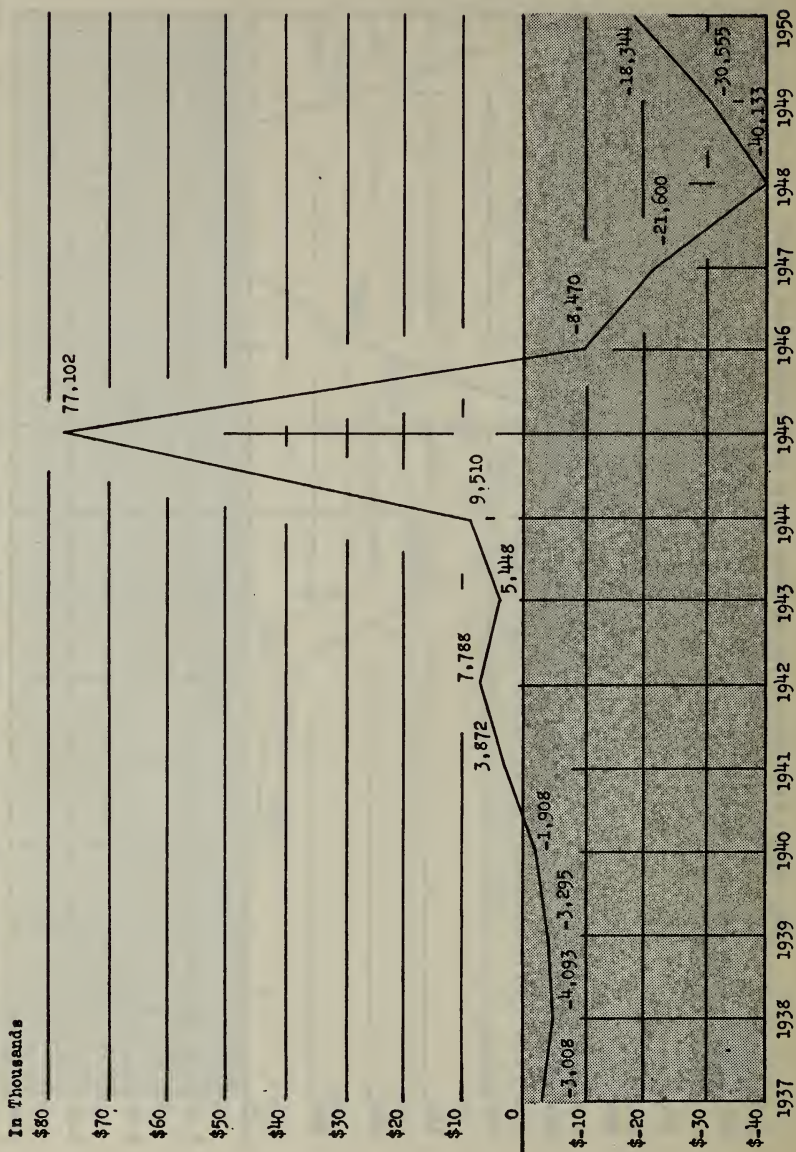
NET PROFIT AND LOSS BY FISCAL YEAR—INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP FOR THE BLIND—LOS ANGELES



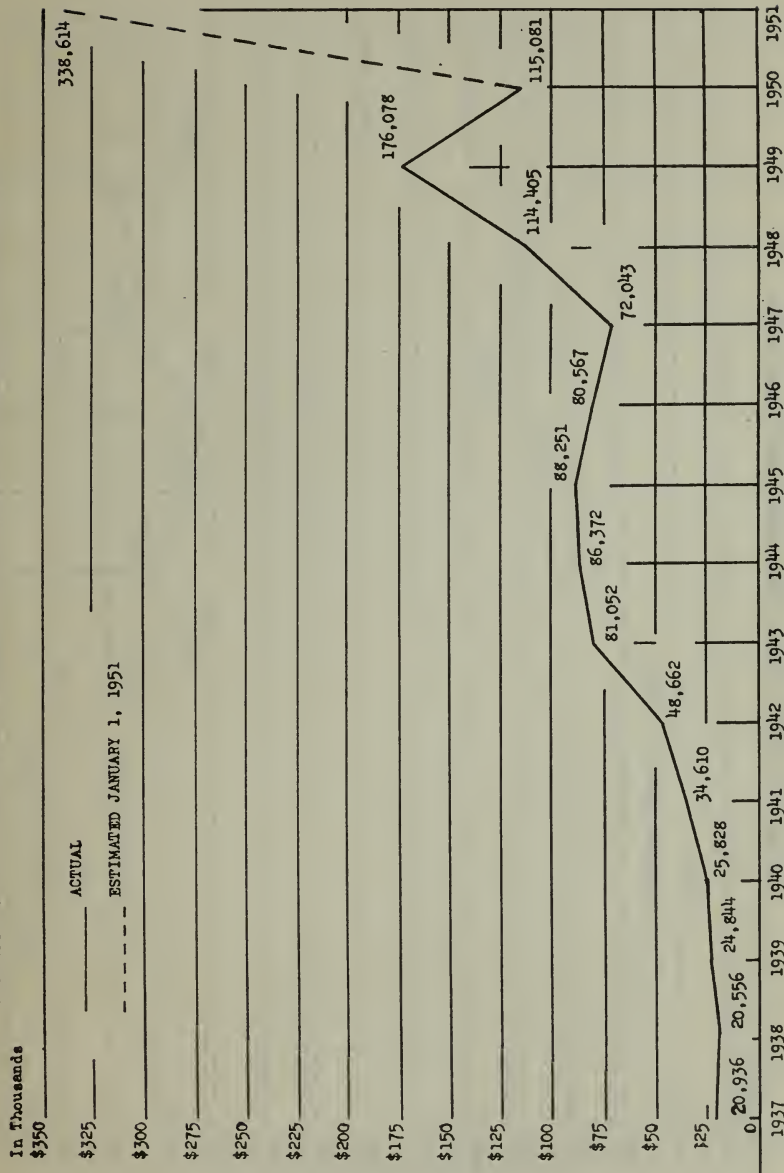
NET PROFIT AND LOSS BY FISCAL YEAR—STATE BLIND SHOP—SAN DIEGO



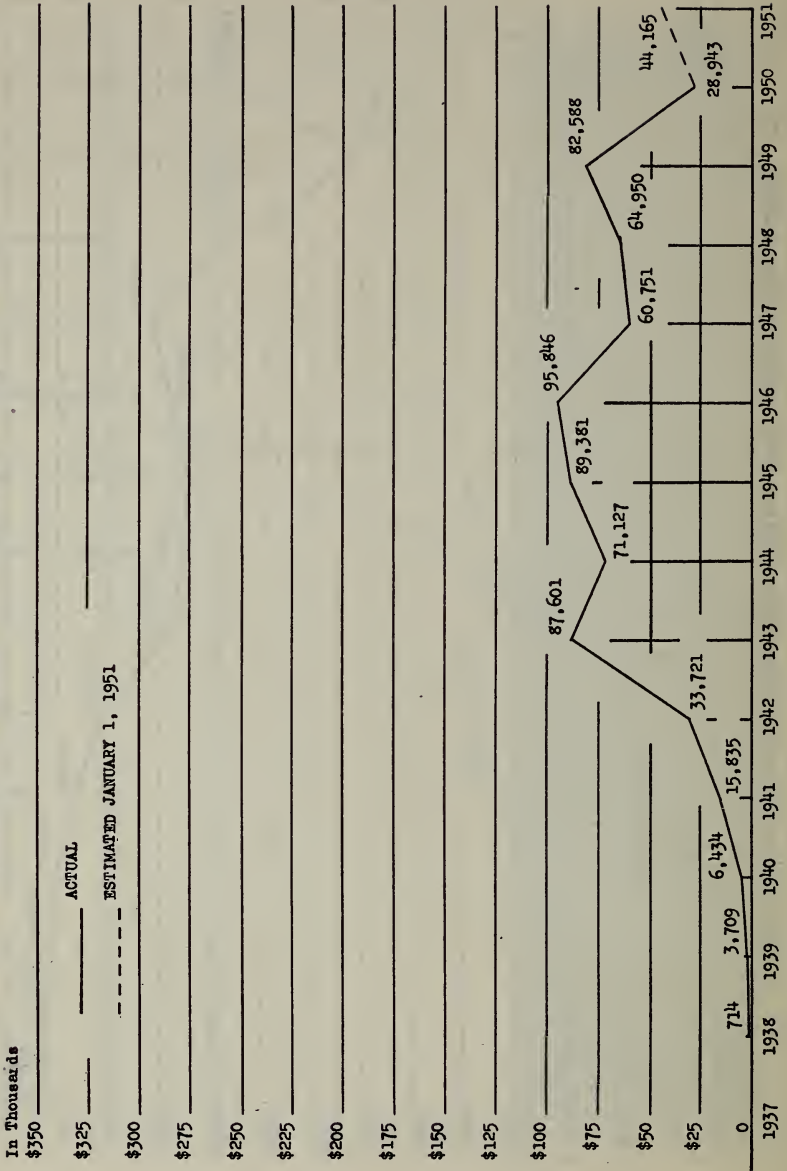
NET PROFIT AND LOSS BY FISCAL YEAR—TRAINING CENTER FOR THE ADULT BLIND—OAKLAND



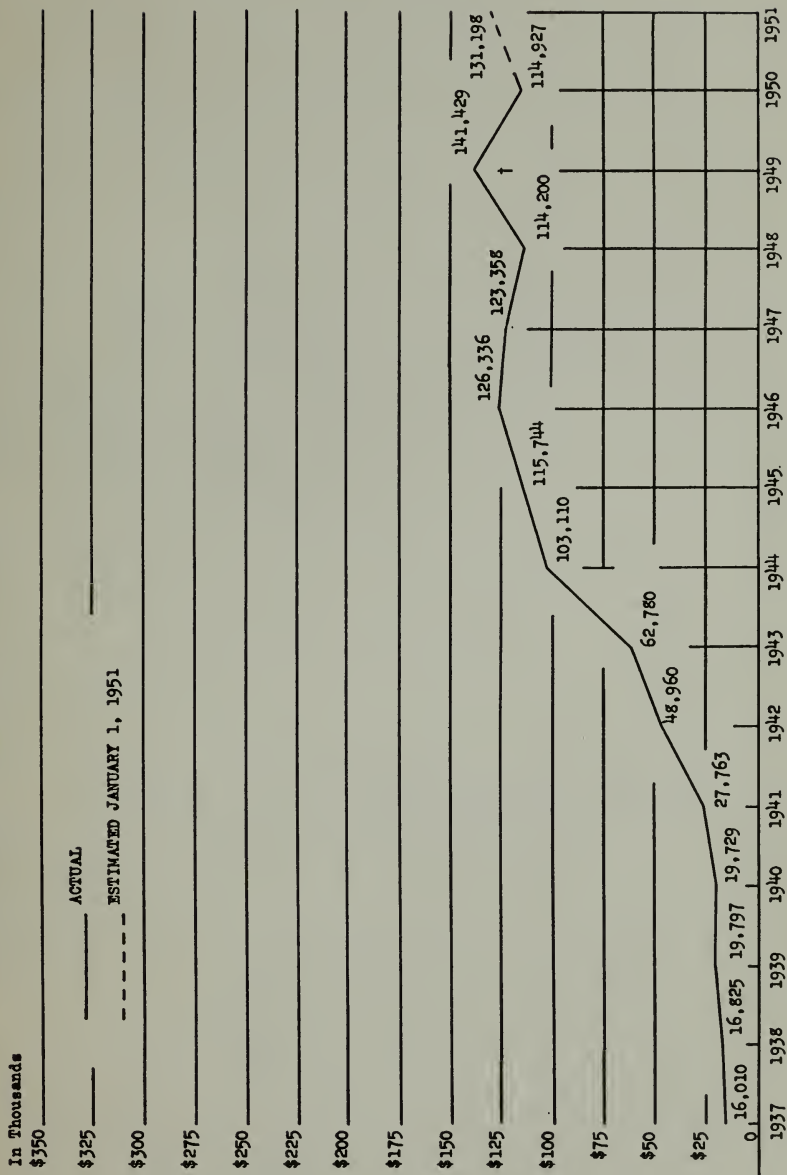
PAY ROLLS BY FISCAL YEAR—INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP FOR THE BLIND—LOS ANGELES



PAY ROLLS BY FISCAL YEAR—STATE BLIND SHOP—SAN DIEGO



PAY ROLLS BY FISCAL YEAR—TRAINING CENTER FOR THE ADULT BLIND—OAKLAND



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